

## ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: Democracy and Good Governance in a multi-ethnic society: Nigeria as a Case Study. A grassroot study of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria 1999-2011

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The “ethnic contraption of Nigerian state” was a natural creation, but exploited by the British through colonisation, and then propagated by the ethnic nationalities therein through the internally entrenched mindsets. The divergence in political mindset derives from her multi-ethnic composition, which created a non solid but soluble political environment. This environment so created and the actors in it, both active and non active attract the attention of scholars who want to probe the continuing poor returns in the democratic adventures of the country. I probed into the fundamental issues responsible for her poor runs on the democratic tracks and the premise was based on the perspectives of people within the three ethnic groups under study, as well as through the exploratory works of Donald L Horowitz, and Clifford Geertz which I call the Horowitz- Geertz framework.

A strong ethno-political mindset among the three nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani stood as the nucleus of this study. The mindset is evident in their political philosophies, their membership of the registered political parties, their open and discreet political rivalry, and their pattern of political argument.

I found also that the political philosophies of the various personalities in the first republic of 1960-1965, and the second republic of 1979-1983 still dominate the present democratic process, from 1999 to 2011, though with minimal difference noticeable only in the personalities within the political parties.

I found that some of the major political parties still draw their bulk of supporters or members from the ethnic groups where the parties are formed, particularly in the Yorubaland and the Igboland. Parties are ethnically based and so won elections within the three ethnic regions.

I found as well that the people from these three ethnic groups viewed their political rivalry as normal. Just as the people believed that they are members of their ethnic groups first, and Nigeria identity as a matter of coincidence.

I found that the issue of ethnic mindset is both internally as well as externally influenced. This contributed to the persistent violent ethnic influenced crises among the three ethnic groups under review.

I found also that lack of good governance created deep resentment and distrust of the political class by the masses.

I established that the negative ethnic mindset and other internally entrenched contingencies combined to sustain the ethnic divide among the three nationalities, and thereby impede the success of democracy in the country. From 1999 up until 2011, development performances by the elected officials are state specific. Unlike in the pre-independence era and also during the first republic of 1960-1965, where development was purely regional dependent, and rivalry among the three ethnic groups was based on developmental performance.

In spite of the inheritance of the same colonial political legacy by the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, the discovered political apprehension within the groups, detailed how ethnic mindset makes nonsense of democratic politics in the country, and constitute the basis for the poor run that has held down democratic politics in Nigeria.

DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY:  
NIGERIA AS A CASE STUDY.

A Grassroot Study of the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani Ethnic Nationalities

By

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## **Dedication**

I wish to dedicate this study to My Late Parents Okoro Agwu Nwajiah and Late Grace Ekeowu Okoro, both of Amata/Amagu Mgbom Autonomous Community, Okposi, Ohaozara Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

### **Acknowledgement:**

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## Chapter 1

### 1. Synopsis.

To introduce this Doctoral (P.hD) dissertation study, it consists of 3 Parts made of 14 Chapters. The topics discussed are chronologically and sequentially arranged. The Author conducted a grassroots study of the Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria. It is anchored on ethnological recording using qualitative research method, and directed specifically on political issues within the three ethnic nationalities.

**Part A.** The first part of this study contains 4 chapters. Chapter 1: covers the theoretical problems and framework of the Ph.D thesis. It contains also the Theoretical issues, choice of the Case study areas, Research questions, Hypothesis, Analysis of other existing Literatures on Democracy, Ethnicity and Democracy, Critique on principles of democracy.

Chapter 2: the contained issues that dwelt on the methodology used for the study, selection of the nationalities, selection of independent variables, tools for ranked and unranked enquiry, Data, Sources, and Process of Data collection, empirical field, and interpretation paradigm.

Chapter Three 3: This chapter contains issues on Geography of Nigeria, Conceptualising Nigeria, People and Ethnicity, Population and the historical Administrative structures as obtained in the three ethnic nationalities in the pre-colonial years. The chapter focuses also on the fundamental issues that defined Nigeria.

Chapter 4: This chapter deals on the issues of Negative Ethnic Mindset, Frames, Nigerian factor and politics, parties and ethno-political interests, as well as Hypothesis.

**Part B.** This part contains the Author's field work. It covers the three case study areas of Enugu, Abeokuta, and Kano in Nigeria; and it contains also the analysis of the research study and culminates with the result and findings of the research study.

Chapter Five: This chapter contains the Research Design and the Variable factors, Case study areas, electoral demography of the three ethnic nationalities, voting pattern of the three ethnic groups, and why negative ethnic mindset. It involves also a detailed analysis of the field research and the findings of this study. It entails the level of political and democratic impulse that ethnic-mindset and the numerous problems created through differences in ethnic political philosophy by the nationalities under review. It captures a representative mood of the people within the three ethnic nationalities, and it delves also into the possible future of ethnic-political mindset, and the future of Democracy in Nigeria.

Chapter 6: This chapter focuses on Democracy, Identity questions, language and politics, location, ethnic loyalty, and ethnic political solidarity, as well as problem of ethnic political Interest, and democracy in Nigeria.

Chapter 7: This Chapter touches on issues of ethnic difference, political, and geographical divide. It contains also issues on domination and marginalisation, Ethnic Agenda, Ethnic Agitation, as well as parties, and party structure.

Chapter 8: Chapter Eight of this study contained issues on Democracy, Good Governance and ethnic factor in Nigeria. It includes also issues on politics and service, democracy and development.

Chapter 9: This chapter dwells on issues like impediments to democracy in Nigeria, Ethnic political preference and individual choice, ethnic loyalty and national loyalty.

Chapter 10: It contains topics on identity question and the future of democracy in Nigeria, Ethnic Association and politics in Nigeria, as well as ethnic Governors forum, and the homeland factor in Nigeria.

Chapter 11: The issue of structural impediments to democracy in Nigeria. It goes on to contain topics on federal character, Quota system, and zoning policy, as well as issues on Ethnic Struggle and democracy in Nigeria.

Chapter 12: It contains topics on systemic impediments and democracy in Nigeria, political Investors, and political Navigators. It includes also issues on Party Conventions, Candidates nominations, and the problem of Nigerian factor.

Part C. This part contains the Research Recommendation. Appraisal of the political tools of the nationalities; Accommodating the concept of ethnic mindset within the democratic paradigm, and Coding Ethnic Mindset as bargaining tool, etc.

In the conclusion, all aspects discussed are further strengthened, thereby making a comparative analysis of the positive and the negative effects they create or may have imposed on Nigeria's political scene.

## 1. THEORETICAL PROBLEM AND FRAMEWORK.

The external adventure of the British colonial government into the geographical area known today as Nigeria, and the subsequent amalgamation of the Northern and southern parts of the area as one political entity, remains indelible in the Nigerian political map, though, without any common background. Like Schwarz said, that the pre-colonial history of Nigeria is not Nigerian history but rather the history of different tribes, or, occasionally, groupings of tribes (Schwarz 1965: 10). The three ethnic groups do not have a common history. The country's boundaries have no basis whatsoever in history; except for the Atlantic Ocean which forms the southern boundary.

But though it is true that Nigeria's pre-colonial history does not provide the basis for a Nigerian nation, it is also true that there is little in her pre-colonial history that adds to the difficulty of preserving and building the Nigerian nation. There are relatively few unsettled scores, historic grievances, or thwarted drives for expansion that could have been expected to erupt after the British departure. (Schwarz 1965: 11). But it was not until the country gained her independence from the colonial power that the products of that colonial adventure in the country emerged (Agbaje, 2004: 156-157). In an era that was characterised by regional political rivalry, fuelled by ethnic political philosophy, the Nigerian political scene took a non national agenda direction. Though the concern of most policy makers then was to see how the newly Independent African states, of which Nigeria was one, could survive. Considering the multi ethnic configuration of the country, democratic politics in the country became an issue of survival. The ethnic mindset became a Herculean task for the young politicians to grapple. (Ake 1996)

Since Democracy is about inclusion and exclusion, and about access to political power, as well as the privileges that go with inclusion and the penalties that accompany exclusion, ethnic identity is then exploited to determine who is to be included and who is to be excluded from the emerging political configuration. (Horowitz: in Diamond and Plattner 1994: 35-37). As it was explicitly expressed before now, ethnic impediment has consistently remained or accounted for the major constraint confronting democracy not only in Nigeria, but in several sub-Saharan

African states. Many Scholars in the recent democratic politics in Nigeria, like Larry Diamond (1996), Osaghae (1996), Falola/Ihonvbere (1985), who addressed the political development in Nigeria in a more thorough manner, were of the opinion that given the Western-type institutional structures bequeathed to the country by the British, modernisation of the country in the political image of the Western countries would be easy. Other Scholars like Chazan (1993), and Whitehead (2002), were equally convinced that democratic politics would help to accelerate development and political stability, despite the many ethnic nationalities in the country. Nevertheless, there are also those who believe that democracy as it is practiced in the western World cannot materialise not only in Nigeria, but also in other Sub-Sahara African Countries. It has been argued that the West African societies are divided by tribal, religious, linguistics, cultural, economic, and regional differences(Lewis: 1965)

The ethnic mindset that bedevilled Nigeria since independence called for thorough findings, so as to provide a way out, and to enable the polity to create a favourable environment for development of effective democratic politics. In an environment characterised by political rivalry between the component ethnic nationalities that formed the country, that is the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, politics has become a matter of survival of the fittest. This development has created great deal of concern as to the workability of democratic politics in the country.

However the concern of most scholars and policy makers in Nigeria has been how to limit or eliminate negative ethnic mindset between the three major ethnic groups under study. The Nigerian State as a creation of foreign intervention power, and which was accomplished without any meaningful input from the natives that inhabit the geographical regions within the state, was left to wriggle herself out from the ethno-political conundrum. The number one political challenge in Nigeria has been how to deal with the national question (Agbaje, 2004), and this is so because the foundation of the Nigerian state was not based on any tangible unifying factor, but instead only on the need to get the colonial power away from the artificially unified country. (Schwarz 1965)

With entrenched negative ethnic mindset evident within the three ethnic nationalities, cohesive nationalistic response on issues of national importance is often ethicized.

According to one of the first republic frontline politicians, Mr Mathew Mbu, who passed a damning judgment on the state of the country believe that the country lost in 1964 the opportunity to build a constructive national idea, by the cross carpeting crisis in Yorubaland. The loss of that opportunity imparted heavily on every other thing within the Nigeria state. Mr Mbu lamented that;

“Zik won all, the majority, in the Western region. It was when he went to the East, that this notorious question, this notorious carpet-crossing, for the first time in our history was enacted on the floor of the Western House of Assembly. Before then, we never knew about carpet-crossing. Those who won on the platform of the NCNC were suddenly bought over by the Action Group. We lost it from that moment onwards. That was crude tribalism on display. That’s all. What else could it be that somebody of Eastern origin should come and control a region that belongs to the westerners? That was a clear display of tribalism, crude and that was when Nigeria lost it, the true sense of nationalism. Yes! AG, and the NCNC, that I belonged to, was at opposing ends on true nationalism and nothing else. NCNC till tomorrow remains a nationalist party, one Nigeria, one people, one destiny. AG believed in One Yoruba, One nation, One Oduduwa”<sup>1</sup>.

The structural as well as the artificial indicators, which emanated from the ripples of First republic political experience 1963-1964, still dominate the politics of the three ethnic groups from 1999 up to 2011 national elections. When political expectations become an illusion, and out of reach, questions began to emerge as what must have been responsible for the political dislocation in the country. But the answers to this development cannot be far from what Horowitz enumerated (Horowitz: 2000). Then for the purpose of political clarity as well as objective analysis, this thesis was based on several generated issues, and observations recorded in the field during the course of the research work. We believe also that the need to take precaution in the overall attempt to dissect the three ethnic nationalities as regard their activities and political philosophies affect the general political evolvement of the country.

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1. Ambassador Mathew Mbu was speaking in interview with Vanguard Newspapers Nigeria (vanguardngr.com, 12/12/2009).



And as a result of these entrenched differences, ethnological research becomes more obvious, and especially when one considers the fact that the three ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani experienced different styles of colonial influence, though under the same British colonial administration. (Diamond: 1996).

In dealing with the ethnic mindset within the Nigerian political scene, it is our utmost desire to plead for caution, and that the experiences of the ethnic groups should be taken to high value, especially on the analysis of political development and the place of ethnicity in democracy in Nigeria's context. The peculiar distinct natures of the three ethnic groups need to be taking into account. The choice of the three ethnic groups for a case study in the country is derived from the fact that the country from inception recognised only the three languages of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa as the language of the Nigerian federal parliament. And again, the Nigerian Currency, the Naira, has only the three languages of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa on it. So, without opposition, the country is set on a Tripod, made from these three ethnic nations.

Not only the socio-cultural diversity between the ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, marked them apart from each other, the dissimilarities noticed in their contact with the British colonial adventure in their various homelands was also an obvious case. Again, the pattern of administrative approach by the colonial government in the internal politics of the ethnic groups was not uniform. The penetration of the British into the three tribal homelands and the assumed pattern of relationship between the colonial power and the ethnic nationalities took different dimensions. In all three ethnic homelands, the British colonial government was confronted by different needs and situations.

However it is assumed that the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani present one of the several microcosms in Nigeria. These three areas encompass a rich socio-cultural diversity, which provide a suitable benchmark for ethnological research studies. The argument for the importance of selecting the three ethnic nationalities was explicitly based on the historical role played by individuals from the three selected nationalities in realising what became Nigeria in 1960.

The Nigerian state which evolved from the British external adventure in the area southward of the Niger River is endowed with factors that distinguish it with other hitherto existing societies within Sub-Sahara Africa. However, the factors which centred on the variables which emanated from the diversity of these ethnic nationalities make the Nigerian state an extreme case of diversity, and the peculiar nature of the tribal groups makes it worthy of a critical attention.

Some studies on democratic politics in Nigeria tend to focus more on the functional nature of democracy in the country Chazan (1993, 2003), and Agbaje (2004), without taking time to look at the ethnic structure as well as the philosophies in which these ethnic nationalities relied on to relate to each other. However the temptation to focus only on the failures of democratic politics as presented by Diamond, Ihonvbere, and Chazan, will create an incomplete analysis of the real problems confronting democracy in the country. Then, Diamond asserts wrongly in his argument that democracy has been impeded in Nigeria through act of corruption by officials of the government, Lijphart asserted also wrongly through his proposition that democratic politics in Nigeria is being emasculated through act of Corruption by those in authority. The decision of Diamond (1996) and Lijphart (1987) to ignore the place of ethnic mindset in the non functionality of democratic politics in Nigeria, before the Nigerian Independence from the British, and immediately after the Independence, as well as the democratic era of 1979-1983, and 1999 to 2011, against each other, and to focus instead their attention on the functionality of democracy in the country.

The need to avoid the misrepresentation inherent in the Diamond and Lijphart studies by their deliberate decision to ignore the ethnic mindset of the three ethnic groups against each other and as shaped by their individual ethnic political philosophy, as well as the divergent colonial history of the three ethnic groups underscores the relevance of this study. Indeed Diamond (1996), and Lijphart (1987) as well as Ihonvbere (1985), and Osaghae (1987) who have been commenting extensively on democracy in Nigeria may be criticised on several directions. Diamond, Lijphart and others conducted their studies in the years of the military, preceding the 1999 return to democracy in the country, and when resistance to military intervention in politics amongst active political activists from the three ethnic nationalities was very high.

However, the military intervention in Nigeria's politics, and the desire to perpetuate itself in power helped to create the Zeal that sustained the resistance of the activists from the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. While their Zeal for a civilian democratic dispensation may have resulted in the demise of the military government in the country, it did not end the ethnic political rivalry. Put differently, the eventual demise of the Military Government did not in any way result in, or translates to the end of negative ethnic perception or mindset between individuals from the three ethnic groups. After the return of democracy, the three ethnic nationalities remained adamant in their ethnic political philosophies.

But what many scholars did perceive as democratic failures in Nigeria today is actually the continuation of the entrenched symptoms generated by numerous independent variables that arise from ethnic mindset, as manifested through language, and religious beliefs, then the political history of the three nationalities, as well as the geography of the three homelands. The endemic poor democratic performance of Nigeria, as orchestrated through ethnic mindset is the problem area of focus in this study.

A significant portion of the argument in the study revolves around the held negative political mindset running across the three tribal groups under study. Most of the existing studies on democratic politics in Nigeria were either based on the promises a democratise Nigeria holds, not only for Nigerians, but also for the entire African Continent, as well as World politics (Whitehead 2002), or on the failure of democratic institutions in the country (Diamond 1996), (Horowitz 1985), (Chazan 1993). All these put together, ignore or neglect the role of ethnic mindset in political agenda setting in the Nigerian national politics. But then, the failure of national politics to grow beyond the elementary level of democracy can be attributed largely to tribal conspiracy, and political conspiracy. Ezeani reacted this way by quoting that, increased political consciousness could be expected to consolidate the unity of states with homogeneous populations and "strain or destroy" the cohesion of states with diverse populations<sup>2</sup>

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### The rationale for focusing on ethnic mindset:

Developing interest in researching Democracy and Good Governance in a Multi-ethnic Nigeria, and as a grassroots study of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, is a way of highlighting the degree of differences between entities in political bargaining. It is also an effort to widen the research scope on the many fronts of democratization, as it affects peoples and societies. Besides, it tries to dissect the state of Nigeria through the three ethnic components that was conscripted to form the state naturally evolved from, and to speculate on why democracy has not succeeded in the country. The focus here is to look at the consequences of “Ethnic Mindset” as it is found in Nigeria, and the political impact of it on democracy in Nigeria. Prior to this research study, the researcher was of the opinion that many Nigerians may have come to terms with the reality of democratic politics in Nigeria, and how not to rely on negative ethnic influenced political mindset, while making political decisions. My input as a researcher in this field of study is to conduct a qualitative research that is both politically and ethnologically grounded.

The politics of a nation is the sum total of the character and attitudes of its people. Human character is a product of situations, experience and the process of socialisation in a particular environment. Character as referent is however mercurial because human beings have the capacity to adapt to new situations, shed old attitudes and adopt new ethos, work out new political arrangements and as they do, their national outlook and modes of internal political organisation evolve. It is for this reason that reliance on stereotypes for analysing a people may not convey eternal truths but only a reflection for a particular moment in history. Still, when one look at ethnic nations closely, it is possible to make certain deductions about the attitude of the people and to jump from this to attempt an analysis of their ways.

A character analysis of the Nigerian national politics falls more into the realm of a political environment defined through ethnic Mindset. Although not exactly available for public consumption, ethnic Mindset remains nonetheless, a strong tool used in formulating processes, and rules of engagement in the political lives of the various

governments in the country and through which the three ethnic nations in Nigeria organise themselves in relation to others within the political field. This much is also evident in the political relationship between the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria. It is assumed that individuals from certain nations are likely to behave in certain ways. Put differently, one can easily understand the nation associated political attitudes through the vehicle of cultural analysis.

There has been a continued and unabated high level of political acrimony among the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria. No tribe or ethnic group is ready to accept another ethnic group as being politically equal in the country. This political struggle has made it impossible for any meaningful political development to succeed. Political disunity has been in existence for several decades now and may probably remain so for more generations to come. This political acrimony has resulted in a significant high level of ethnic political Mindset in the country. No one is willing to talk about Nigerian project. Nigeria has become nobody's business, every individual politician and ethnic group care only for that which will be of benefit to them.

The desire of many people in the country for a non rancorous political atmosphere through the sustenance of popular democracy is the main contributing factor for this research study. Without doubt the benefits inherent in a true and popular democracy cannot be quantified. It has been observed that out of all the mechanisms of governance, it is democratic system of governance that can heal the political wounds of a struggling country like Nigeria and create conditions favourable to all her citizens. It has also been argued that democracy has the potency of uniting various ethnic nations and regions, irrespective of the political opinions that may abound in such society. But then, myriads of questions kept lingering within every available discourse point in the country. This has been how can democratic governance weld up the different and negative entrenched ethnic political mindset in the country.

Although Nigeria has the capacity to operate successful democratic political institutions, but the internal dynamics created and nurtured by man remained the greatest albatross to the dream of many. Like many who prophesised that the

survival of democracy in Nigeria will eliminate the incessant and undue political wrangling that has continued to threaten her stability, but unfortunately people make this assertion without considering the internal contingencies that are internally entrenched vis a vis the three ethnic nations of Yoruba, Igbo, and the Hausa-Fulani. The democracy model of government throws up the challenge to find out why democracy could not stand on solid feet in Nigeria. It created also avenues to ask questions on why democracy was unable to germinate in the country, despite the availability of fertile soil necessary for true democracy.

Democracy is equipped with facilitating windows for multi-ethnic political dialogue, that a complex human environment like Nigeria could employ to unlock the internally entrenched negative political mindset that has bugged her down for several decades. The deep probe into the “W H” questions of “What, When, Where, and How” will provide the society a clue to the fundamental reasons for the lacklustre democracy in Nigeria. The instrument for the probe was provided by the use of case studies to find out the degree of difference among the three ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. This was done by looking at what divides the three ethnic nations, as well as what unites them. The effort made so far by each ethnic nation and political region in order to eliminate political discord between the three ethnic nations.

### **1.2.1. The Choice of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani as a Case for a periodical comparative political study.**

The previous attempt to explain “Ethnic Mindset” and its political consequences in the effort to develop lasting democratic civil governance in the country has not been without strong pitfalls. This has also affected not only the democratic fortune of the country, but also the entire psyche of the country. The promises which many Scholars saw in an Independent Nigeria made them to believe that the country will mature to an enviable position in the arena of political discourse. However this was a blanket assumption without any recourse to the nature of entrenched divisions in the mode of the ethnic distinctions in the country. (See figure 1.1 below). Indeed the geology of the landscape as well as the ethnological compounds available in the country escaped the thought of many Scholars and Commentators. The assumption, that like many other countries with multiple ethnic compositions, the country will

politically meander the contours of ethnic polarises could be easily described as a misplaced one.

Nationality Geographical/Region of Habitation	Traditional Polity Type	Head/Authority in charge of Polity	Nature of Traditional Polity	Traditional Authority Type
South(East) IGBO		<i>Obi</i> or <i>Eze</i>		
I. Northern or Onitsha IGBO	Constitutional Monarch	<i>Ama Ala</i> (Assemble of Free-born Adult Males) presided by the <i>Opara Ukwu</i> (eldest male from the prime kindred)	Trade- Based/Cultivators No standing army	Centralized/Democratic
ii. Southern or Owere IGBO	Village Democracy		Trade Based/Cultivators No Standing Army	Decentralized/Democratic (Republican)
iii. Western IGBO	Constitutional Monarchy	<i>Obi</i> or <i>Eze</i> and <i>Ndi</i> <i>Nze na Ozo</i> (Men of Title)	Trade based/Cultivators No standing army	Centralized/Democratic
iv. Eastern IGBO (including the Afikpo village groups)	Village Democracy	<i>Ndioke</i> or <i>Ndichie</i> (Heads of Lineages) and <i>Ama Ala</i> (Assemble of Free- Born Adult Males)	Trade based/Cultivators No standing army	Decentralized/Democratic
v. North-eastern IGBO	Constitutional Monarchy	<i>Eze</i> or <i>Obi</i> or <i>Atamanya</i> and Title Holders (Council of Chiefs)	Trade Based/Cultivators No standing army	Centralized/Democratic
South (West) YORUBA				
i. OLD OYO Empire	Constitutional Monarchy	<i>Alafin</i> assisted by the <i>Oyo Mesi</i> (Council of State) and the <i>Omooba</i> (Liason Council)	Conquest and trade based/ Cultivators Standing Army	Centralized/Democratic
ii. IJEBU	Constitutional Monarchy	<i>Awujale</i>	Trade based/Cultivators No standing army	Centralized/Democratic
iii. EKITI Confederacy	Constitutional Monarchy	<i>Oba</i>	Trade- based/Cultivators No standing army	Centralized/Democratic
North (Far) HAUSA-FULANI (Hausa, Fulani, Nupe peoples)	The Sokoto Caliphate Sultanate Empire	<i>Sarkin Muslimi</i> (the Commander of the Faithful) Sultan of Sokoto	Conquest-based Standing army	Highly centralized Highly authoritarian

Figure 1.1: Inventory of the political characteristics of the three nationalities. (Source Ejiogu, 2004)

When one views the assumptions in the context of four observations attributed to Horowitz (2000), Geertz (1965), Schwarz Jr (1965), and Agbaje (2004), one would discover the fault line. According to Horowitz, the three ethnic groups are not ranked ethnic nationalities (Horowitz 2000) Furthermore two of them agreed that the ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, are neither culturally homogenous, nor geologically connected. The absence of ranking in the Nigerian polity created rooms for adversarial tendencies in the country. This is so because of the fact that, when no ethnic nationality is subordinate to the other within a geographical setting, then each existing tribal group will begin to aspire for dominance and relevance (Horowitz 2000). In the same vein, the ethnic groups not only still live in their respective homelands, they also are not geographically intermixed. Though there are people of other ethnic groups living within the ancestral homelands of the three ethnic nationalities (Schwarz Jr 1965).

### **1.2.3. Research Questions and Hypothesis.**

The major research questions focus on the influence of negative ethnic mindset and its general effect on democratic performance in a “Multi-ethnic Nigeria”. The research attempt to answer the following questions:

1. How “Ethnic Mindset” shaped the Nigerian political scene? What are the efforts being made by the political parties and the Government at various levels to minimize the effect of ethnic dependence in Nigeria’s political scene?
2. How are the political parties in Nigeria structured? Did the political system in Nigeria encourage cultural consciousness?
3. To what extent does negative ethnic mindset contribute to the political divide in Nigeria? Are the differences attributed to ethnic political mindset responsible for the political instability, fraudulent elections and corrupt practices in the Nigerian political scene?
4. Can Democracy play any significant political role in fostering political unity amongst the various ethnic nationalities in Nigeria?



5. Is there any element of Good Governance in the democratization of Nigeria?  
Can Nigeria's democracy ever provide her citizens the dividend of democracy?
6. What is the chance of popular Democracy surviving in a "multi-ethnic society" like Nigeria?

#### **1.2.3.1. Hypothesis**

- (i) the ethnic mindset that says, only that person with my traditional identity is qualified, and can be trusted.
- (ii) the religious mindset that says, only that individual who shares the same faith or belief with me can earn my respect and trust.
- (iii) the regional mindset that divides the Nigerian state into areas of comparative advantages. This revolves around the various ethnic political capacity building policies and preferential political alliances that arise from the projected mindsets.

These three stand-points are directly connected to the low democratic performance in the country. Then the political animosity that prevails in the country is also traceable to a disorganised polity, as represented by the type of politics played by the individual politicians from the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. The political philosophy and political agenda-setting of the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study revolve around the factors as contained in figure 1 in page 34 below. Democratic politics as practiced in the country does not revolve round the premise of national political philosophy. Every politician in the country is moulded through the prism of ethnic political agenda, religious mindset, and the belief on regional solidarity. Ethnic identity and cultural consciousness overshadow national identity, and religious mindset removes people from each other. Religious

consciousness created abusive mind among the populace, irrespective of the tribe. All these factors affect national political cohesion. As hindrance to national cohesion, it becomes as well a clog in the wheel of democratic performance and development in the country.

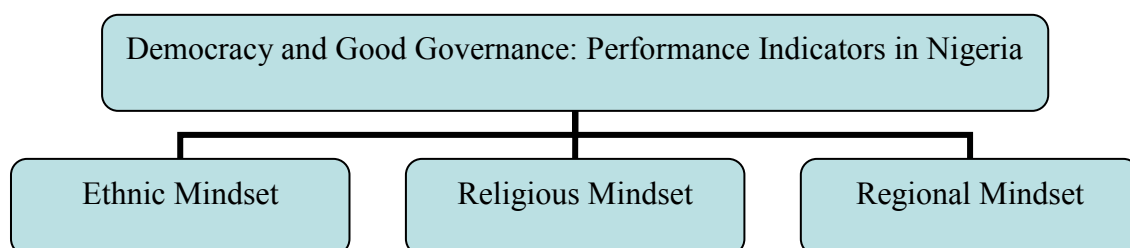


Table 1.1 the table symbolises the connection of the causal factors that influence the low performance of democratic governance in Nigeria. The Democratic performance of Nigeria is based on these three factors. The inability of the many scholars in the past to look into these factors makes research into democracy in Nigeria an incomplete adventure.

*Hypothesis No. 1: Given the high degree of ethnic and political animosity in the past among the three ethnic groups that compose the greater part of the Nigerian State, the chances that ethnic influenced political mindset will cease to be an issue in post 1999 return to democratic politics was high.*

Differences in the categories of political actions and reactions amongst hitherto existing ethnic nationalities within a prescribed geographical political entity, determine how well a society develops politically. This applies also to the political situation in Nigeria. Before the 1999 return to democratic politics, each of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani adopted different political tactics to pursue their ethnic political goals. However after the demise of the Men in Khaki, the ethnic slogan was not common, and nobody thought of it playing any prominent role either, until after the first set of political associations were formed and registered to operate as political parties. However, the prevailing political circumstances as presented in the ethnic conspirator-schema might simply be that each ethnic group attempting to assert itself, and prevent others from subjecting her to an undesirable political condition or disadvantage in the country.

But the silence that prevailed in the pre 1999 years was punctured through one of Horowitz's arguments'. He argued that, it is the competition for scarce values and materials that propels people to see themselves as members of distinct ethnic groups, and also as people whose interests conflict with that of other ethnic groups (Horowitz: 2000: 15). The zeal to dismiss the military created an extensive euphoria within the landscape, to the point that people forgot the language and religious affiliation of each other. Though each one knows where he hails from, but the consciousness often associated with such difference has minimal effect on the political calculation of the majority at the time. The oneness that cemented the political understanding of the three major ethnic groups evaporated and disappeared without notice. Ethnic mindset suddenly emerged from exiled and thwarted the relative cordial political relationship among the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani. Ultimately, the high expectation within the academic and non-academic arena for a Nigerian political environment devoid of ethnic sentiment became an illusion. Political animosity based on ethnic competition became fierce and assumed more dangerous dimension.

*Hypothesis No. 2. Given the high level of cultural differences amongst the three ethnic nationalities, the possibility that Democracy will minimise the cleavages associated with cultural conflict was moderately high within a greater segment of the three ethnic nationalities in 1999.*

In the pre-1999 political dispensation in the country, ethnic mindset was internal and fierce in the country. But political evolution and other development preceding the demise of the military in the political life of the country, suggested a non-violent atmosphere. Although, for the simple fact that the three ethnic nationalities have developed cultural consciousness in the past, it is understandable to believe that the coming together of the three groups in the national political stage was a matter of time, and will certainly evaporate into latent inter-ethnic conflicts. These conflicts manifested themselves soon after 1999. The structure of government so formed after the demise of the military and the attendant problems that arose from the contending ethnic groups resulted to the many wanton destructions and bloodsheds in different parts of the country.

As noted already, language, homeland-factor and religion constitute the three major facilitators of the ethnic political philosophy of the three nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in the country. The problematic situation that emerged from the application of one of the three arrow points vindicated the claim that the marriage of 1914 which joined the three ethnic nationalities together was unwisely consummated. Each of the three tribal groups employs her language to communicate directly with her immediate Constituency. But it would be argued that the colonial masters did not envisage this to emerge as a problem for the nationalities, while they were leaving the country.

This second hypothesis confirmed that what motivates every individual ethnic nationality is not the symbol of one Nigeria or national identity, but rather the cultural heritage and solidarity that binds each group together. But then, the more entrenched the cultural differences are, the more difficult it has become for a working democratic polity to evolve. The use of language as a cultural tool by the three ethnic groups creates a deep political gulf between the contending nationalities.

Political campaigns are carried out in the various ethnic languages within each homeland. In the western region, that is inhabited by the Yoruba and serves as the Yoruba homeland, the Yoruba is used by political parties and candidates canvassing for votes in the region. Neither Igbo language nor Hausa language is used to campaign in Yorubaland. The same thing applies also in Igboland, as well as in

Hausaland. So, each tribal group uses her local language to address the electorates, and in so doing, the candidates and their political parties connect directly with just a section of the national electorates. Then the electorates from other parts of the country cannot get hold of the messages from the candidates and their parties. The suggestion or argument that democracy will reduce political conflicts predicated on the idea of cultural difference was defeated. The cultural heritage of each group rather than act as a bridge that connect other contending groups ended up performing the role of an ethnic marker.

*Hypothesis No. 3. Given the nature of human and ideological forces that combined to return democratic politics in the country, the assumption that the regional political tendencies that characterise politics in Nigeria in the past will diminish was very high.*

Political negotiation and development in the country has always been dominated and decided by regional alliances. Opinions were that the regional political inclination in the past would cease to be an issue in the political calculation in Nigeria. This was supported by the process that led to the 1999 return to civilian administration in the country. The actions of the politicians from the three ethnic groups created political euphoria that moderately overshadowed the mindset that the three ethnic nationalities had against each other. But it was more of theoretic thinking than practical. The political development that evolved after 1999 return to democracy dashed every political permutation and forecasts made by scholars and non-scholars. Prior to 1999 political dispensation the apologists of regional politics idea was that a person's loyalty should be to his region rather than to his country. Their political argument and position corroborated one of Horowitz's submissions which implies that in an ethnic divided society a group strategy for survival and political relevance is usually anchored on the argument that a child should be taught to protect the welfare of his own people and let other ethnic groups look out for themselves (Horowitz 2000: 7). People always look at the chances of their ethnic community having a comfortable political position in the country, even if other ethnic nationalities should protest. The statement was what characterised the politics of the country in the 1950s, 1960s and late 1970s. With that mindset coming into 1999 return to popular democracy, many people were of the opinion that political decision will depend less on regional affinity. But development in the political arena ended the dream of those people who were

anticipating borderless politics in the country. There are certain political notions and cleavages within the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani nationalities which create and support regional political consciousness.

*Hypothesis No. 4. In this Hypothesis, it is assumed that the greater the number of diverse ethnic nationalities consummated into a single political entity, without a negotiated political identity by the nationalities themselves, the more difficult it will likely be for such a political environment to form a stable political pattern.*

A political environment formed without active participation of the political elements within such environment stand to experience political uncertainties. The Nigerian state was formed without a negotiated agreement from the natives of the corresponding nationalities. As expected, an entity without a negotiated national identity; certainly will produce a political environment without a stable political pattern. Even the theorist idea that the differences of the component units will dissolve with time, was ill conceived. The non recognition of the native political structure available in these three regions was a bad political judgement on the part of those that consummated the marriage of the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani into what became the Nigerian state.

### **1.3. Some of the Existing Literature on Democratic politics in Nigeria Reviewed in their Theoretical Perspectives**

#### **The theory and Problem of democratic politics in multi-ethnic Nigeria:**

Studies on “Ethnic Mindset” and democratic politics in a ‘multi-ethnic society’ as represented by Horowitz (2000), Geertz (1965), Ted Gurr (1999, 2003), Lijphart (1977, 1999), Powell Jr, (1982), Gboyega (1997), Agbaje/Diamond/Onwudiwe (2004), Mbaku/Ihonvbere (2006), Lewis (1965), Ihonvbere/Shaw (1998), Schwarz Jr. (1965), Ejiogu(2004), Chazan (1993), Birch(2007), Grugel(2002), Whitehead(2002), Berg-Schlosser(2007), and Kersting/Cronqvist(2005), as well as Goodin/Tilly(2006), have been conducted through different arguments, and from diverse theoretical angles. These studies consist of those that were carried out by scholars who pride themselves as modernised scholars and also others who projected their argument on different territories of political studies, and chiefly on the prism of liberal, neo-liberal, and radical view points. Those who pride their works on the basis of modernity have tended to emphasise socio-economic factors “and the rise in corruption” (Diamond/Chazan 1999: 3) in their explanation of democratic governance in “divided Nigeria”.

On the one hand, Horowitz (2000), Geertz (1965) and Lijphart (1999) stressed the importance of modern political institutional structures recognising the many differences that existed between people in a divided political environment so as to enable democratic stability in such society to prevail. On the other hand, both also insisted that ‘ethnic intolerance leads to political decay’ and as such breeds political instability in society. Their analytical positions implies then that political order in a divided society such like Nigeria would have to depend in large part on a non-bias relationship among the aspiring ethnic nationalities to further development of political institutions, create chances for effective mobilisation of new political actors into politics. When Horowitz applies his argument to what he calls the “ethnic groups in conflict”, his position implied also that the prevalence of political instability in them stems from “ranking or non-ranking status and the different political experiences derived not only from the colonial experience, but through each individual group traditional institutions” (Horowitz 2000).

Both Horowitz and Lijphart believe that the absence of broad participation of citizens in politics helps to predispose the people in the 'divided society' to low democratic performance.

Arthur Lewis (1965) is one Euro-Africanist whose "Sub-Saharan Africa oriented" perspective on the problem of democratic governance in the West African sub-region is worth a review. He concluded that the West African states are both vertically and horizontally divided (Lewis: 1965-19). According to him, some people ranked vertically higher than others, and horizontally in the sense that some groups are marked off from each other by tribe, language, habitation, and many other divisions which cause group solidarity (Lewis: 1965). But chances are that the more or less indigenous societies, each with an independent political philosophy as well as with large gulfs of inter-social mindset tried to accommodate the differences that existed between them, the more the political environment could become precarious. But the various tribal peoples that constitute Africa's most populous foreign created political enclaves survived to a minimal extent through sets of values, norms and structures as left behind by the departing masters. Though, the created environments existed and still exist side by side, and thrived within the same political scenario, but the existence does not translate into political unity, and stability, but rather it is that of sheer accommodation and tolerance. However, some of the political values, and norms, are all embedded in the political structures of the colonial power and which was massively transferred to a section of post-colonial Nigeria as legacies.

Furthermore, one cannot be wrong to describe Contemporary African societies as classless or arrangements of two sets of characters, norms, and structures, the "new" and the "residual". Lewis argues that, it is therefore, the "classless character of contemporary African societies that reflect on the political scene of the various sub-Saharan African tribes. (Lewis 1965). Scholars such as Schwarz and Zartman (1986), O'Donnell (1978), Falola and Ihonvbere (1985), Gboyega (1997) who write from a different perspective have also theorised on the subject. Some of these radical opinions emphasise the role of classes, the dynamics of their incessant struggle, and centre-periphery issues in their own explanations. Arguing about the Nigerian state and its inhabitants, Gboyega contended that political instability in the unitary national state that Nigeria was carved into was a result of political miscalculation and greed



on the part of the political elite after the departing of the British from Nigeria. This stems from the inability of its 'leaders' to take control over other classes in the struggle "to create a viable and stable democratic etiquette in the social formation of the country" (Zartman/Gboyega 1997: 158-164).

When applied further to the Nigerian state, both the ancient in the mould of Plato, Aristotle and other classical scholars and the present or better still, those who described themselves as modernists accounts of democratic politics are found wanting especially on the ground that they tend to ignore the necessity to address the historical roots and anthropological importance of the ensuing tense relationship between the established Nigerian state and the three major nationalities that served as Pillars in the construction of it, even though they had no say in its construction proper.

Questions on why the political rivalry involving the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani emerged, how the rivalry that emerged is sustained by each group, and what the political class in the country is doing to reduce or control the tense political relationship associated to issues raised, and how the issues even survive colonialism and persist in the post-colonial era need be asked and addressed. The neglect of these salient and fundamental questions to an extent established why Falola and Ihonvbere (1985), and Badru (1998) all classified the nationalities in the 'Nigerian' state as mere relics of history whose continued existence hinder the rise of a viable bourgeois hegemony in the country's "social formation" (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985: 234). Even after he extensively established that the history of party politics in the 'Nigerian' state, is one in which individual tribal affiliation, powerful backers and not political parties played dominant roles in the selection of candidates, "determine whether an individual could be elected into any political office, or not", Oghosa E. Osaghae (2003: 54). Osaghae argued further that the resilience of the nationalities is a mere function of the failure of the national state "to respond satisfactorily" to their well being (Osaghae 2003: 57).

Certain accounts of democratic politics in Africa raised some of the central issues involved in this study. Callaghy (1984: 32) for instance, links democracy and Good Governance in post-colonial Africa to "the absence of organised political leadership

and the consequent search for it". Unfortunately, he leaves one to hibernate in a bid to discover what could be responsible for the absence of those two factors; that is "organised political leadership and the consequent search for it". In their respective studies conducted from the realist perspective too, Lewis (1965), Lisa Anderson (1986, 1987), Lijphart (1997) all believe that the weakness of Africa's states, and their "precarious links" (Chazan 1993: 68) to the diverse groups that constitute the larger society, are factors that contribute to low political performance in African states that tried to democratise. But from Horowitz's (2000) point of view, one can add that the problem is derived from the competition for legitimacy and dominance between Nigeria's nationalities and the diverse components of her larger society.

Some studies on democratic politics in contemporary African states do not adequately consider the part played by the European's through the disruption of African peoples, and their subsequent effort in state building in Africa, which produced legacies that are lopsided and which in turn contributed to the low administrative performance (Ejiogu 2004). However, in the case of the 'Nigerian' state, blame for the persistence of low democratic performance in her body politic is often hinged on a flawed federal structure (Kirk-Green 1971), and an imperfect constitutional arrangement that failed to address the political strains (Whitaker 1981). Richard Sklar (1965) and B. J. Dudley (1966) attribute the problem to an imbalance in education and economic development. Larry Diamond (1988: 16) attributes it to "tribalism and regionalism" in the country.

The problem of democratic success in Nigeria is well beyond education and economic imbalance as both Sklar (1965) and Duddley (1966) want to argue. Both Scholars failed to realise that the nationalities have no known relation or line of communication before the arrival of the British, and the subsequent amalgamation of 1914. They also failed to realise that each of the tribal or nationalities developed at different pace during the regional structure of governance in the country. It is not politically correct to use imbalance in education as basis of measure for the low democratic performance in Nigeria. The argument by Diamond that tribal and regional sentiments are largely responsible for the political inconsistencies in Nigeria cannot be far from the truth.

But Diamond did not elaborate more on why he believed so. Indeed a disturbing catalyst to the political stress exhibited by the nationalities stems from the fact that they belong to a different political world. The political development as was noticed in the three nations before the emergence of the colonial power in their various regions bears different characteristics. It is not enough to mention tribal and regional sentiment as causal effect without going further to dissect the features inherent in their tribal claims. However, that the people see themselves as Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani did not tell anybody anything that justifies the mention of these perceived factors by Diamond. There is the absence of detailed fact on how tribal and regional sentiments undermine the progress of democratic governance in Nigeria. Both Scholars failed to establish how tribal and regional sentiments contributed negatively or positively in the democratic process in Nigeria. Lewis (1965:19) established a case as to the problem of most Sub-Saharan African States, of which Nigeria is one of them.

In each of the cases mentioned above, Democracy and Good Governance is viewed strictly as the presence of a stable, organised, responsible deployment and dispensing of scarce resources for the good of the people within a society by an elected government. But alluding that democracy portends everything amount to leaving the public with the political assumption that the national state enjoyed democratic stability from 1999 to 2011. That definition of democratic performance is indeed the justification given for the studies reviewed above and others similar to them which present the Nigerian state as a given legacy.

We can argue that the literature reviewed so far stresses only 'traditional variables' that is, 'traits of governmental structure', 'the social environment of governments' or 'somewhat rigid mixture of the two' as the determinants or foundation for democratic performance or the absence of same in a polity. As we have argued earlier, this tendency to classify the "non-political parts of the fundamental points of politics between the three contending ethnic nationalities as independent variables. However in studies that made effort to attempt in probing the root causes for low performance of democracy in the country has hardly fulfilled that quest adequately.

It is the candid view of this study that Horowitz (2000) theoretical framework, which he based on Ranking and Non-Ranking theory, is a tool that clears the path for a departure from this norm in this type of social research. By locating the determinants of a stable Democracy and Good governance, and precisely through those aspects of non-democratic view points that could be considered specifically on their “political” traits, in the sense that the three ethnic nationalities belong to different political worlds, or through their non corresponding internal relations, which also show that each is enveloped by divergent philosophy of human identity.

The framework fills a void in the study of Democracy and Good Governance in a society divided through an internalised ethnic mindset, by serving as an appropriate tool for conducting studies in such societies. Horowitz’s framework is capable of illuminating the effort to explain Ethnic Mindset in polities of all kinds. The reason for that is because of how it could be applied to research situations to ensure that “the crucial x-variable would be one that involves both government and society simultaneously, not each separately. In this vein, one would argue that, the stability of any democratic society, and perhaps other polities, might be held to depend on the degree of cooperation between the tribal or ethnic groups within such society and the established governmental structure.

Indeed, democratic stability, not minding differences in ethnic political philosophy, is one out of the several possible roles that “cooperation between ethnic nationalities and established governmental structure” can guarantee. Cooperation serves as a backbone, and as well as a potential mediating and higher-order variable in the preservation of democracy and good governance, and also in checkmating the negative influence of ethnic mindset on governmental performance in polities. Horowitz (2000) framework is partly validated by the deliberate manner in which it is steeped in sound ethnological as well as sociological tenets. The argument that men are able effectively to carry-out political responsibilities, if their ready acquired norms and behaviour substantially equip them for such task and, if the norms and practices required by their concurrent social responsibilities do not create hiccups or painful ambivalences as well as contradictions with their political ones.

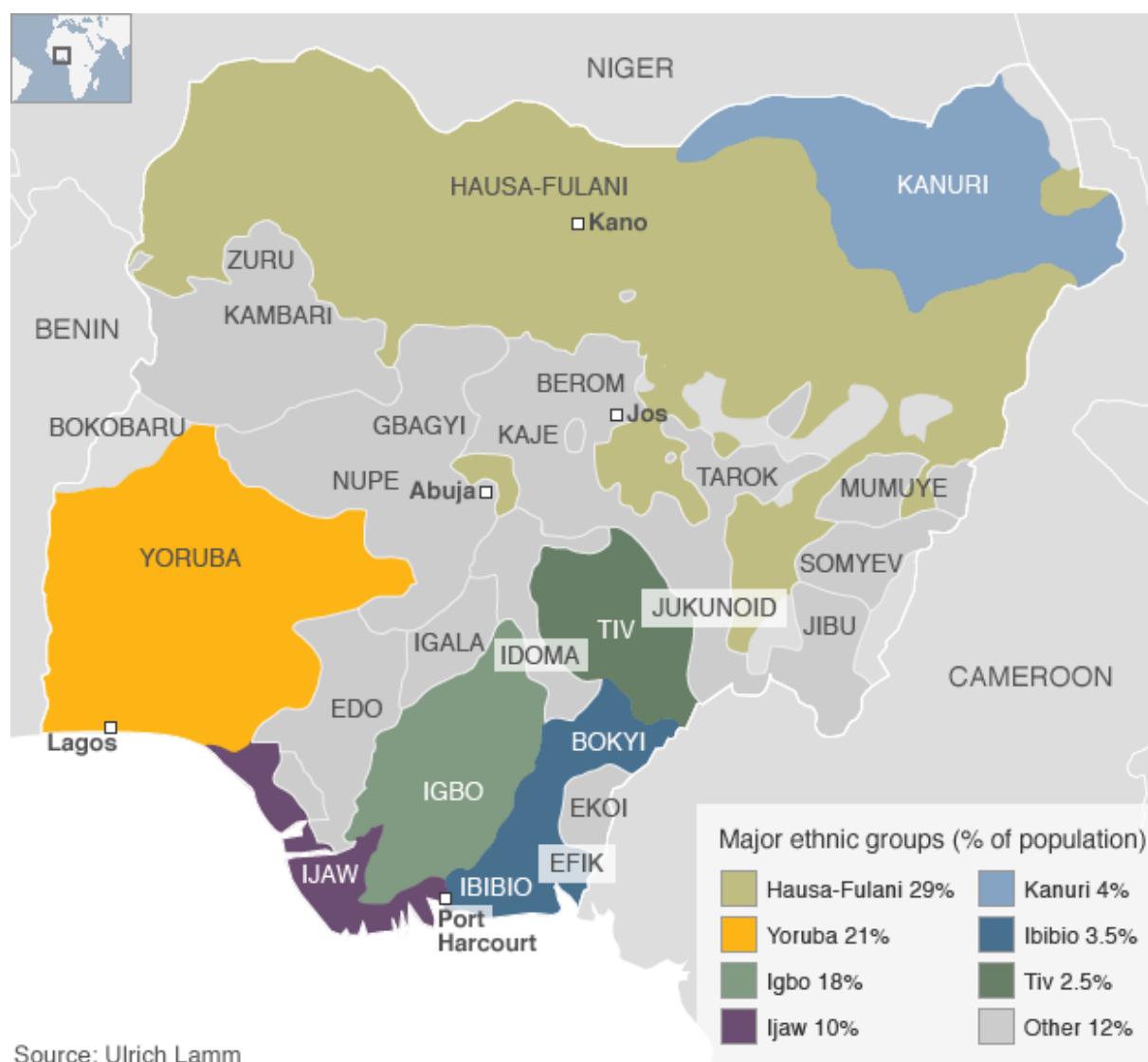
The derivative hypotheses in the framework are such that they relate “ranking patterns to the cooperation and stability of a society’s administrative structure”. (Horowitz 2000: 22-29). It implies that “*ranking* between contending tribal or ethnic groups and *cooperation* among them in political decision making process are the two principal factors affecting democratic politics in divided societies. Hence the following hypothetical postulations which said that: “High performance by a government requires compromise between the contending tribal groups and inconsonance with the established governmental structures; and high democratic performance requires consonance among the elements of the various fundamental issues in a society, can be said to connect to the situation under review. The consequence of lack of compromise between the contending factors and lack of consonance in relation to those vital organs in the state authority will certainly result to very low performance in Good Governance by a government in any aspiring democratic society like Nigeria.

#### **1.4. Ethnicity: the Nigerian perspective.**

The expression ethnic society can be said to connect to people who could be linked to a common heritage, history, language. According to Horowitz (1985).The Nigerian Society is structured just like every other normal society, be it in the developed countries in the west or any of the developing countries. But then, the pattern of location and mode of socialisation differs from one ethnic homeland to another and from geopolitical region to another. In any case the various ethnic groups that made up the geographical structure called Nigeria are uniquely composed, and uniquely endowed in both human and material resources. Each ethnic group is naturally harboured within a specified space of landmass in the country. The Landmass is also uniquely endowed with each ethnic region having a unique soil texture, as well as the vegetation in the areas.

The ethnological compass of the country is so structured that no one ethnic group is so directly located direct or near to another. Each of the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba has another ethnic group located in between them. For instance, moving from the Igbo ethnic homeland to the Yoruba region, there is the Bini or the Edo ethnic group located between the Igbo and the Yoruba. And between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani up North are the Nupe in Niger state, and Igbira people of Okene just close to Abuja. On the Northern side, the Idoma and Igala are the two minority groups located between the Igbo and the upper Northern region dominated by the Hausa-Fulani (see map 1 below). The most significance aspect of the localisation of the ethnic groups is the natural separation that existed between them. It succeeded in removing every possible linkage or affinity between the three ethnic groups under study. Ethnicity as it existed in Nigeria is a natural phenomenon. It is not a man made concoction. There is no record showing any direct communication between the three ethnic groups under study in this study in the past. Nature did not plant the three ethnic nations where they are today through any form of accident or coincidence.

## Ethnic and tribal groups in Nigeria.



Map 1:1 showing the several ethnic nationalities and their homelands in Nigeria. (Source Ulrich Lamm)

According to Horowitz assertion, in divided societies, ethnic affiliations are powerful; they permeate, and are usually passionate and persuasive. (Horowitz 2000: 12) Each of the ethnic groups claims a particular heritage and ancestry different from every other ethnic nationality in the country. Each ethnic nationality in the country claims a distinct tradition and culture, with no connection or resemblance to any other existing culture or tradition in the Nigerian State. Every ethnic group claims to be humanly genetically different from other ethnic or tribal group in the country.

Ethnic influenced decisions and outcomes are felt in every aspect of life in the country. There is never anything done in the country without some elements of ethnic consciousness involved. In every class of human relationship in the country, ethnic reference always form major component of such relational endeavour. According to Horowitz (2000: 53), Ethnicity embraces groups that are in themselves differentiated by colour, language, and religion. And common sense implies that wherever a heterogeneous society emerges, there is bound to be pocket of crises. Then for democracy to thrive in such societies there must be presence of crises absorbers in every part. In this vein also, it is assumed that ethnicity is the greatest type of cleavage for democracy to manage. According to Diamond ethnicity taps cultural and symbolic issues as well as basic notions of identity (Diamond 1994: xviii). In any way, just as Diamond pointed further out that the group worth and entitlements generate conflicts that are intrinsically less amenable to compromise, than those issues involving material issues. The submission by Diamond is a direct presentation of the situation of Nigeria.

In divided societies, ethnic conflict is at the centre of politics. It strains also the bonds that sustain civility. According to Horowitz, ethnic conflict is often at the root of violence that usually results in looting, death, homelessness, and the flight of large number of people from one area to another (Horowitz: 2000, 12). This defined the relationship that exists in societies that are perpetually divided through the work of nature. Horowitz affirmed that the ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani do not stand in a hierarchical or ranked relationship with each other; rather, they are parallel and unranked groups, divided by a radical cleavage. (Horowitz 2000: 16). Likewise Birch (2007:22) made his readers to understand, that the neglect or relegation of the political significance of religious, cultural, and ethnic cleavages within national societies by most liberal and socialist political theorists in the past, created room for the dominance of both economic and class differences in the political debate (Birch 2007). It implies that theorists failed to accord religious, ethnic and cultural influenced mindset the recognition due to it. Though, ethnicity or tribal affiliation can be interpreted by individuals to mean different things, and precisely according to the need of a person. It does not convey the same meaning and cultural attachment to people. It follows that what ethnicity or tribal affiliation mean to an



individual from a given society has a different meaning and interpretation to people in another Society. As in other societies within the sub-Sahara Africa, with multilingual, multicultural, and multiethnic population, Nigeria's democratic journey has been in so many ways troubled, and punctuated by the unresolved questions of the above mentioned fundamental issues.

The above mentioned factors created the reason for one to divide the Nigerian society into three antagonistic parts. However, depending on the ethnic group, region or line of argument, it would be said that, the regions in Nigeria are differently populated and structured. But because of the nature of Nigeria structure, so it does not leave room for ethnic reformation. Like Birch asserted, that people are locked into their religious, cultural and ethnic groups, and having no wish to change even if they could (Birch 2007:22). This is particularly so in the three Eastern, Western and Northern regions of the country.

As noted in chapter 1, the Hausa-Fulani society is so fragmented and stratified. The nature of the Hausa-Fulani society is configured to the point that there is clear established gulf in terms of connection within the society, and among the constitutional personalities. The traditional Hausa-Fulani society is so built in a way that does not provide any mutual condition necessary for the creation of a favourable channel that could bring them closer to the Igbo in one hand, and the Yoruba in another way. Just as was detailed in the previous chapter of this study. In chapter 1, we tried to establish a historical structure as well as social relation within the pre-colonial Hausa-Fulani society. One would better describe the social connection within the Hausa-Fulani community as feudal bequeathed heritage. The exclusive life style of the Hausa-Fulani person alienated him from the Yoruba, and the Igbo. The censorship and total secret condemnation of any Hausa-Fulani person, who is so intimate with a non person from the region, remain a low point in the social environment of the Hausa-Fulani. However, this is an attribute of the fragmented nature of the people and their environment.

#### 1.4.1.

#### **Democracy.**

The word Democracy is define or described by many scholars differently. As a relative term, democracy means form of administration which provide the citizens the opportunity to exercise their governing power either directly or through elected representation by individuals, who are periodically elected by them. As the late Abraham Lincoln, a great American politician and former President rightly defined democracy to be; Government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It thus means that the system provides avenue for every individual to offload his political potentials. Democracy, like any game, consists of rules whose validity depends solely on the willingness of a certain community to observe them. (Diamond/ Plattner 1994: 6)

Democracy can be understood also as an ideology, a concept or a theory. It is an ideology provided it embodies set of political ideas that detail the best possible form of social organisation (MacKensie 1994, Grugel 2002: 12). According to Grugel (2002), democracy can also be understood as an ideal. Grugel went further to argue that, democracy is a mode of decision-making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control, and the most democratic arrangement, where all members of the community enjoy effective equal rights to take part in such decision-making directly, and one, that is to say, which realises to the greatest conceivable degree the principles of popular control and equality in its exercise (Beetham 1992: 40), Grugel (2002: 12).

However, if one goes on to seek definition for democracy, then to find a general acceptable, and more convincing and encompassing definition would have no end in sight. If someone should fall back to the common definition as found in the dictionary, that democracy means the rule of the people, then, arises at that point the question of how to define the people, and how to define also the very meaning of rule (Birch 2007: 111). Furthermore, does the “people” mean the entire adult population, or just those who are property holders? Just like in the words of a leading democratic thinker, while defending the tradition of allowing only property holders to exercise the right associated with democracy. Montesquieu had insisted that democracy must not include those who “ are in so mean a situation as to be deemed to have no will of their own”(Alexander 2006: 119).

In so doing, one cannot arrive at an acceptable and precise definition of democracy; if one just based his definition of the term on the premise of the basic meaning of the word, not minding the fact that the term has a simple and basic meaning. Like Birch (2007) tried to argue that, for someone to understand the intrinsic meaning of the term democracy, then one needs to look at two different alternatives. He suggested that;

“One can start with observation of political practice and common usage, which leads to a definition in terms of institutions and processes and leaves the question of justification to a distinguishable (though not entirely separate) intellectual exercise. On the other hand, we can spell out our democratic ideals and consider what the practical implication of these are”<sup>1</sup>

Other scholars like Berg-Schlosser (2007), Held(1992, 1996), Stepan (1996), Diamond(1999), Haggard and Kaufman (1995), Kersting/Cronqvist(2005), Whitehead(2002), Remmer (1997), have all written extensively about democracy and the requirement necessary for a successful democratic ride in any society. In supporting the argument of Birch (2007), the definition of the term democracy has basic meaning, but then there is extension of the meaning to include some other determinant issues. And indeed issues as argued and demonstrated by Berg-Schlosser (2007), Birch (2007), and to some extent Kersting/Cronqvist (2005). Democracy cannot be completely defined without the inclusion of the fundamentals of a state as presented by Berg-Schlosser.

However, there is no disagreement among the scholars on the basic meaning of the term democracy, the differences are only located on the mode of presentation. Scholars like Held (1992), tried to extend the basic meaning to include new democratic identities and terminology through his liberalisation postulation. Held (1992) presented a modernised theoretical meaning of democracy by advancing the scope of the term from the ancient Athenian model to the present status defined and dominated by the western liberal political ideologies. Other Scholars like Berg-Schlosser (2007), Lijphart (1977, 1999), Diamond/Plattner (1994), Diamond (1999), Whitehead (2002), postulated on the fundamental needs for a functional democracy. This ranges from the societies and the structure of such democratic leaning societies.

#### **1.4.2. Democracy and its requirements: A Critic of Schiller's and Whitehead's principles of democracy.**

As an institution that derives its powers through transparent decision of the people, democracy can be described as voice of the people. But then, it cannot function without the presence of necessary structures in the society. To have democratic institutions in a society is one thing, but to have functioning democratic institutions is another thing entirely. In his argument, Berg-Schlosser (2007), maintained that for any reasonable evaluation of democratisation to be undertaken, the background conditions of modern democracies and their historical, regional and cultural properties must be reassessed. (Berg-Schlosser 2007: 16). Furthermore, Birch asserted that,

“Conflicts deriving from religious, cultural, and ethnic cleavages are usually more difficult to resolve than conflicts deriving from economic cleavages”<sup>2</sup>

It implies that, to think of embarking on democratisation process, one must as a necessity evaluate the fundamental issues associated with the aforementioned factors. Lijphart (1977, 1999), in his own opinion believed that, democracy works and probably would work better, when the cleavages available in a society are considered, accommodated and given due political recognition. Or like Whitehead (2002) argued that democracy precludes conceptual closure with regard to its own identity. He further submitted that democratisation must be understood as an open-ended process. He argued that democracy is contestable, and not just because the values inherent in the contestants differ, or because the political concepts of the individuals lack probably ultimate logical or empirical validation, but also on the account that the political cognition of those involved is inherently critical and reflexive.

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1. Anthony H Birch (2007:111-112), the Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy. Third Edition

2. Anthony H Birch (2007: 22), the Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy, Third Edition.

In any case, the term democracy presents situations that elicit degrees of interpretations but with the same result as an end product. The term democracy can easily be likened to an open Market place or a Sports stadium that has many entrances and exits. Every scholar tried to use different argument to explain democratic politics as a model through which a society organise its activities, as an institution that regulate the functionality of a society, or as a process for public participation in decision-making. In the summation of Downs, he described democracy as a process where each citizen casts his vote for the party he believes will provide him with more benefits than any other (Alexander 2006: 111). But one would argue that politics as defined by instrumental science cannot be restricted to any shallow model of rational decision. In the same vein, Bernard Crick wrote years after Downs assertion, that politics is like a market place and the price mechanism of all social demands(Alexander 2006: 111).

Democracy or democratic politics is adopted by societies in a way of finding a near equitable means of steering the affairs of their environment. In the proposition of Berg-Schlosser (2007), societies differ fundamentally from one another. And so the foundational structure of each society provided it, the demand and supply mechanism needed to create an enabling political agreement between the diverse communities within such societies. Sartori argued also in the same direction that, "Modern men", want another democracy, in the sense that their ideal of democracy is not at all the same as that of the Greeks' (Sartori 1987: 279).

Nigeria, like other developing countries who have adopted democratic politics, or who are in the process of creating conducive environment for the practice of democracy, has foundational problems to contend with. The foundational problems define the relational structure of the Nigerian state. History, ethnicity and geographical setting formed these foundational problems in Nigeria, and each of them affects democratisation in one way or the other.(Diamond 1999), and (Zartman and Gboyega1997). The figure 2 and figure 3 below, according to Schiller (1999:33), Whitehead (2009: 10-11), displayed the necessary principles associated with democracy, and democratic politics. However, the big question remains, if it is compulsory for every democratic aspiring society to prove evidence of the below listed principles before such society could be adjudged to be democratic.

### 1.4.3

### Principles of Democracy

Level: Principles:	Micro: Individual citizens	Meso: Social and political groups and organisations	Macro: Political system, institutions
1. Basic human rights	Personal rights, legal protection, freedom of opinion	Freedom of organisation, protection of minorities	Limited state power, independence of judiciary, rule of law
2. Openness of power structure	Free access to political communication and political power, rights of control	Organisational pluralism, elite pluralism	Separation of powers, limited terms of office, mutual checks and balances
3. Political equality	Equality of voting rights, equality of political recruitment	Equal opportunity for organisational resources	Equal opportunity in the electoral system
4. Transparency and rationality	Plurality of sources of information, chances for political education	Independence and plurality of media, critical public	Transparency of decision-making processes, rational discourses, documented bureaucratic procedures
5. Political efficiency and effectiveness	Political interest, political participation, civic competence	Effective aggregation of interests, mobilisation of political support	Effective decision-making rules and institutional balance, sufficient resources

Figure 1.2. Source: Adapted from Schiller (1999: p. 33), and Berg-Schlosser (2007: p. 39)

One thing need to be clear, there is no society that is well prepared ahead of democratic politics. Thanks to the various schools of thought with regard to the several ways democracy has been described, defined, and argued by scholars.

Democracy is not in any way practiced through a single or identical political format. Each society selects a political format that it finds capable of maintaining, and of course a format that suits and accommodates the fundamental issues within it. In that case, there are differences between the forms of democratic politics practiced in societies around the world. There are some societies where presidential democracy is practiced, while in others parliamentary democracy holds sway. But despite the argument put forward by Linz (1994), and also Birch (2007: 109 – 132), in their analysis of the two mentioned democratic systems, it remains a fact that there is no ready-made society for democracy.

## Principles of Democracy (ii)

1	Control of government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in public officials.
2	Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3	Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4	Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government.
5	Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined.
6	Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by law.
7	Citizens also have the right to form relatively independent associations or organisations, including independent political parties and interests groups.
8	Popularly elected officials must be able to exercise their constitutional power without being subjected to over-riding (albeit informal) opposition from unelected officials.
9	The polity must be self-governing; it must be able to act independently of constraints imposed by some other overarching political system.

Figure 1.3: Schmitter and Karl principles of democracy as presented by Whitehead (2009:10-11)

Each society strives to create a minimal free and conducive political environment capable of accommodating a democratic system of their choice as supported by the fundamentals of their society. However, the existence of the majoritarian democratic system, as well as the popularised consociational democratic pattern by Lijphart (1984, 1977, 1999), further suggested that the democratic principles as propagated by Schiller (1999), and Whitehead (2002) needed some kind of reformation. Whatever democratic system of government a society decides to adopt ought to depend solely on the cleavages inherent in the structure of such society, and not to be based on borrowed or any alien features.

The principles of democracy as presented by Schiller (1999: 33), and Whitehead (2009:10-11), do not apply to every society, or every society aspiring to democratise its governance. The fundamental issues inherent in a democratic aspiring society depend heavily on the factors argued by Berg-Schlosser (2007: 16, and 139), and Birch (2007:22). The principles of democracy as argued by Schiller (1999), and Whitehead (2002), are attainable only in an organised and homogeneous society. The functionality of Schiller's (1999) democratic principles in a society that is deeply enmeshed in ethnic identity contest remains doubtful. In most of the recent democratic societies, majority of the items listed by Schiller (1999: 33) remains unaccounted, as the fundamental factors within such societies do not provide

opportunity for their applications. The principles of democracy ought to be structured in phases, depending on the organisational capability of a society. Some societies are more organised than others, and for that the principles as argued by Schiller (1999), and Whitehead (2002: 10-11) ought to be modified to accommodate societies with no democratic culture as well as those with weak democratic structures. The Schiller (1999:33), and Whitehead (2002: 10-11) list may not accommodate plural as well as ethnic divided societies, if followed without recourse to factors that shaped every divided society.

In another way, Schiller's (1999) and Whitehead's (2002) list of democratic principles could best be said to represent a democratic request from a society; and that is, the issues that every democratic aspiring society need to provide for a stable democracy to be feasible, but it does not represent the demand of the aspiring societies on democracy itself. The fundamental issues of history of a people, their tradition, ecology of their environment, and the nature of political experience of the society ought to determine the basis on which principles of democracy should revolve around.

Nevertheless, there is a stark difference between a society that just emerged from a dictatorial control, to a society that enmeshed itself so long and so deep into ethnic or identity crisis, and horizontally divided in variegated ways, to a society that is homogeneous and settled. However, it does not mean that a society that imposed on itself a political stress may not have a democratic elected government, but the fact is that such democracy is a defective one. Reason is that, such democracy cannot satisfy Schiller's (1999: 33), and Whitehead's (2002:10-11) list of principles of democracy. Like the proper definition of democracy, the issues raised by Berg-Schlosser (2007:16), and Birch (2007) need to be properly considered, before what could qualify as standard principles of democracy can be adopted.

Berg-Schlosser (2007: 139) raised further issues of concern, and which make the democratic principles as argued by Schiller and Whitehead more difficult to fit into present wave of democratisation within most of the developing countries around the world. If the principles of democracy as presented by both Schiller (1999: 33) and Whitehead (2002:10-11) should be the standard features for every democratic society, then it means that, only the settled, organised and homogenous societies in



the western world can be classified as democracies. This is because; the principles as structured do not recognise the presence of identity crises, language policies, and the role of religion in ethnic divided societies.

Democratic theory can best be said, is tended to work more perfectly with the model of nation-state and largely secularised society in which religion was pushed into an area of the private, or at the most was more element in the social pluralism<sup>1</sup>. As further argued by Berg-Schlosser (2007: 139); the expansion of democratic politics to societies with multinational structure, or those with multiethnic setting like Nigeria, Kenya, multilingual as in the case of Nigeria, as well as multicultural call for reformation and readjustment of democratic demands on societies. Besides, there are also societies with strong religious tradition with just a minimal secularised portion of the population. There is the need to construct a democratic theory that accommodates societies that are yet to resolve these fundamental issues confronting recent day democratic aspiring societies.(Berg-Schlosser 2007: 139), (Birch 2007: 22). As good as it is, and as necessary as it sounds, the creation of condition for qualifying as a democracy cannot be done in isolation of the many fundamental and foundational issues surrounding many of the third world societies trying to democratise.

## **2. Methodology and the theoretical analysis of Democracy and Good Governance in Multi-ethnic Nigeria**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This is a narrative-driven periodic comparative case study in democracy in 'Nigeria', and the role played by three ethnic nationalities that constitute larger part of it. It probes for answers to the question, 'why democracy has not succeeded in the country?' Why has there been no spirit of one Nigeria within and between the three nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani from 1999 – 2011 in Nigeria. This work is carefully designed to satisfy the tenets of three genres in social research, or put differently, case study (Yin, 1984) Interview, and Questionnaire (Bradburn, Sudman 1979), and as regard social research methods (Bryan 2008). The duration of coverage extends over a decade, 1999-2011, covering three distinct democratic transitional periods. However, the 1999-2011 democratic transitions covered four electoral periods 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011. Within these four periods the focus is on the democratic development and political relations between the three ethnic nationalities that inhabit the three regions, and the issue of Good Governance in the country. The study is comparative across the three constituent nationalities, but obviously still focuses on poor political runs by the national government.

#### **2.1. Selection of the Nationalities as case Study zones: Analysis of the role of ethnic mindset in the democratic politics of Nigeria.**

The major methodological issues encountered in the run up to this thesis are: (i) Deciding in which town in the three nationalities in Nigeria to conduct the study; (ii) Deciding which aspects of the nationalities to be measured. These ideas are further developed in the methodology. However, one is mindful of the tangential relevance of the statement that levels and rates of ethnic mindset and tribal loyalty, with other issues in mind, might affect political stability only, or significantly, through their effects on the amount of resemblance among the contending nationalities; and a high level of political solidarity within a given ethnic community might correlate well against democracy and democratic norms, as well as democratic instability, because it is promoted by certain systemic measures derived from social life of a people.

Differences in political development; this involves the selection of which dimensions of their socio-political components to be used for describing the existing political relationship between the contending nationalities, and its effect on democracy and good governance in the country. Finally, there is also a discussion of the various sources used to measure the variables. The Nigerian state is inhabited by several distinct nationalities (see map 1.1 above).

Ideally, my desire was to include all of the nationalities that inhabit it as cases in the study. But the constraint of time and resources would not permit that. Even if time and resources were not constraining factors the absence of an agreement on the actual number of nationalities is another big obstacle to any attempt to include every one of them in a study like this one. Someone is then left with the option of selecting a representative number of them. In order to establish a sound basis to make a representative selection of nationalities to include, it is necessary to review existing views on their number. The issue of the exact number of nationalities in the country is indeed, controversial.

Some analysts who used linguistic differences as basis suggested numbers such as 394 (Hoffman 1974, Otite 1990), 550 and 619 (Wente-Lukas 1985; Otite 1990 in Nnoli 1995). Coleman insists that “there are approximately 248 distinct language groups” (Coleman 1958: 15) in the country. The 1952 census report which also utilized language as a criterion cites that there are 52 of them (Afigbo 1989: 14). In many studies the number 250 is often cited (Nnoli 1995). Some authors have come up with the numbers 60 (Awolowo 1968), 374 (Nnoli 1995), and 143 (Odetola 1978), while some anthropologists have also cited the numbers 161 (Gandonu 1978), and 62 (Murdock 1975). The more serious weakness of employing language as a criterion for identifying nationalities in the country include the fact that a nationality can “speak cluster of languages” (Nnoli 1995: 26), while languages are known to have dialects that are often confused as distinct. Other argument, like the culturally absorbed nationalities in the northern part of the country, and which was to some extent through the Islamic religion. This is to the point that most tribal groups in the northern region of the country now speak the Hausa language, as the official lingua franca of people within the region.

Although there has never been any kind of research agreement on the number of nationalities in the country, no one has in a single study been able to inventory and include even half of what is known. Each researcher adopts either some creative or convenient criteria to arrive at a representative sample of nationalities to meet the purposes of his or her own study. The most convenient criterion known to be popular among researchers has been population size.

Hence the three more populous nationalities, the Yoruba in southwest, the Igbo in the southeast, and the Hausa-Fulani in the upper portion of the north, are selected in almost every study in Nigeria. People who have selected these three more populous nationalities for their research have argued that their population confers political significance on them while the less populous ones which are described as “tiny and politically insignificant” are left out on account of their comparatively smaller population (Diamond 1988: 21). But the history of the country and its inhabitants is cause for us to argue otherwise. Existing literature on the history of the country does not support the view that political significance of the nationalities is a function of just their respective population size. There are pointers to substantiate that too. The pre-colonial trading city-states of Nembe- Brass, Akassa, Bonny, Opobo, and Calabar that later played prominent roles in the trade with Europeans were all founded by the less populous nationalities of the Niger delta, like the Ijaw (Ibeno); the Efik, the Kalabari, and the Itsekiri (Anene 1966, Alagoa 1970, 1971, Ejiogu 2004).

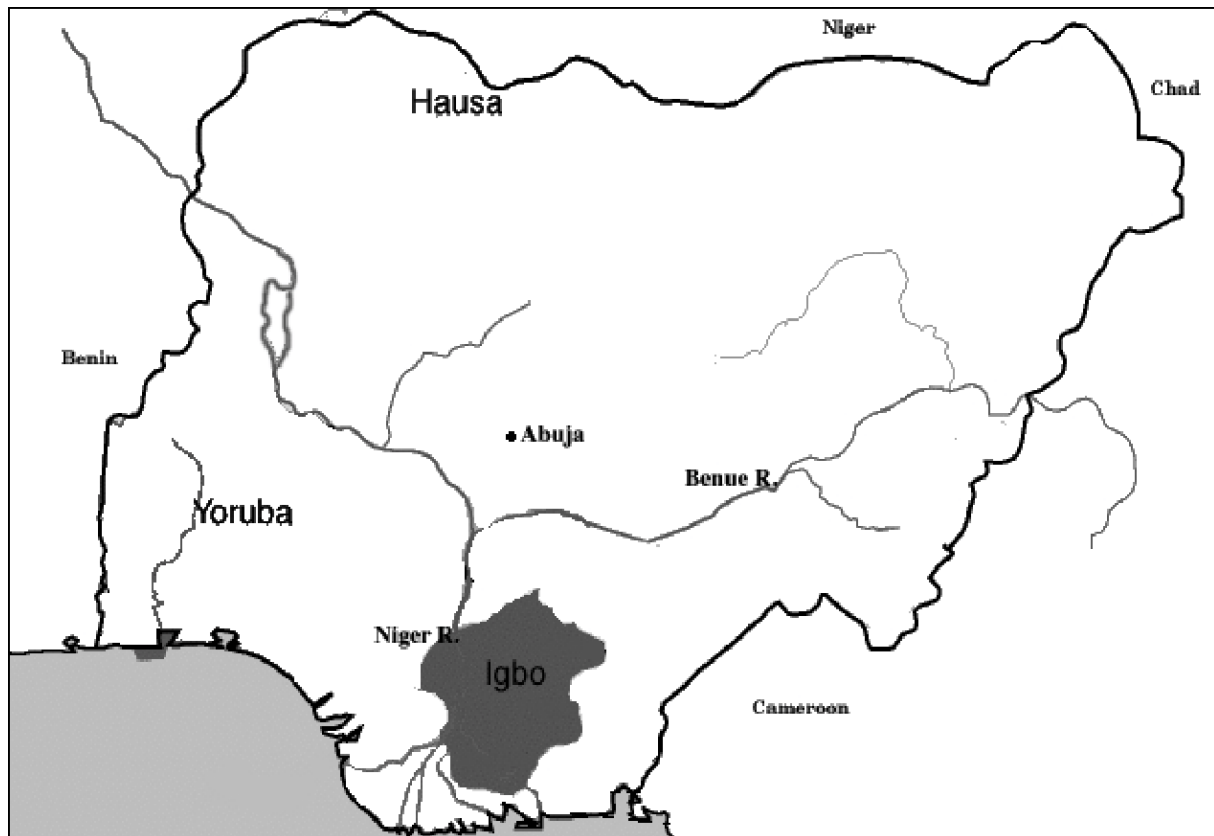
Moreover, ever since the country was amalgamated into national state in the nineteenth century the three more populous nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani have consistently displayed their disaffection against each others perceived dominance in the national politics. The three nationalities have done so without regard to the issue of national question. In the context of this study all such contentious mindsets influenced political rancour from the three more populous nationalities in the country constitute valid indicators of ethnic and tribal polarisation, of which Nigeria is the case in this study.

## **2.2. Selection of the Independent Variables**

The first question is how do we measure the political relationship between the three ethnic nationalities that we have chosen? The following list of criteria would be fairly comprehensive in that regard:

1. Location of ancestral homeland
2. Structure of the three ethnic societies (ranking or non-ranking)
3. Presence or absence of regional political parties
4. Use of local languages as campaign strategies
5. Level of political interaction and cooperation between the ethnic nationalities.
6. Degree of ethnic representation in the national political structure.

These cover most aspects of the political environment of Nigeria. Furthermore, the political development and administrative structures are connected to the geographic location and Vegetation belts of these three nationalities as discussed in the beginning of chapter three. Figure 2.1 below equally provides an inventory of these three nationalities that we selected according to their geographical regions. Their administrative systems, type of pre-colonial society and many more will be appraised in the next chapter.



Map 2.1: showing the homeland of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani (source [www.grin.com](http://www.grin.com) 2006)

Effort was made to ensure that the selection accommodates the range of indigenous societies in the region, and that is, centralised society and decentralised society, trade-based society and conquest based society, as well as the plurality of administrative systems in the ethnic nationalities that inhabit the regions. The differences in traditional politics and the structure of human relations in the selected nationalities are thought of in terms of the issues that distinguish them from each other. The mode of present day political interaction in the country is derived also from the configuration of socio-political and administrative systems and structures of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani.

Furthermore, the categorisation of the Igbo and the specific types of polities that are associated with the groups in each category are reminiscent of the type of society that prevailed in Igboland. The disparities in the type of polities between the northern, western and north eastern Igbo groups who operate constitutional monarchies and the southern and eastern groups that operate village-based democracies are not hard and fast. Among the Igbo who are trade-based cultivators, authority is

democratically structured and dispensed. The centralisation of the structures of authority amongst some Igbo groups does not entail the employment of coercion in its practice.

The categorisation of the Yoruba into three groups is evidence of the absence of an over-arching political organisation in Yorubaland. The fact that there were fairly large political organisations in Yorubaland is not indicative of the fact that their centralised political system was undemocratic. Among the Hausa-Fulani, society and authority were evolved into huge monoliths of authoritarianism. It will be shown that all the aforementioned differences and unique features have some measure of impact on the issues this study intends to establish.

To measure the veracity of the rancorous politically influenced mindset that existed between the three nationalities and the struggle for political relevance within the national state, we decided to look within each nationality for answers, and as well as the heterogeneity in the administrative systems across the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani. We adopted and applied a methodological construct or scheme that was developed by Horowitz (2000), Horowitz's ranking theory, and supported by Geertz (1965) primordial properties analysis. The scholars emphasised that ranking and recognition of differences inherent in the primordial properties of tribal groups in a multi-ethnic society determine in large extent the ethnic relationship and the problem of equitable representation in governmental structures and their impact on political performance in a divided society. For the purpose of this study, we designated the construct as the Horowitz-Geertz scheme or H-G scheme.

The independent variables are conceptualised to correspond with four hypotheses. The first set of variables comprises the differential patterns of inter-ethnic relationship and political development in the three selected nationalities. The other set of variables comprises their political philosophy and ethnic identity. The third variable comprises the general outlook of the Nigerian administrative structure. The fourth variable comprises the four state building policies and the preferential alliances that evolved between the political personalities in the three ethnic nationalities.

The dependent variable is the defect democratic politics measured in terms of such indicators as Campaigns by political parties during elections, use of ethnic languages in campaigns, indigenisation of candidacy right, cross-carpeting of politicians, in the country from 1999 to 2011. The four hypotheses that we presented and discussed earlier are meant to address and dispel any possible concern about vagueness in the study. The H-G scheme constitutes the set of tools for the inquiry. The scheme will aid our task of assessing the ranking system and the traditional structures in each of the three ethnic nationalities as well as between the three contending ethnic groups in the national government itself.

For the sake of clarity, there is the need at this point for a definition of what one means by 'ranking system and political relation. I have elected to do that particularly for the additional reason that they are important features of our discourse. I have deduced from the argument of Horowitz (2000: 55-89) that 'political cohesion' and political tolerance connect specifically to the existence or non existence of ranking and the political relations between diverse ethnic nationalities" in any geographical entity or society (Horowitz 2000).

Furthermore, this author is of the opinion that the employment of 'ranking' as a concept in the description of the Nigerian political field, structure of tribal groups and their relations to other segmental units of the society provides an anthropological resource for this study. In that regard therefore, all the various agencies that perform roles in the realms of political socialisation, social control, party membership, and campaign messages in the society will qualify as segmental units in the description of this scheme. In most cases these are those units that are most contingent and proximate to political contestation in society. They include the family, the lineage, kindred, and channels of socialisation, social control, village and ethnic associations.

### **2.3. Tools for Inquiry into Ranked and Unranked Patterns: A Summary of the Horowitz Scheme**

Before one can delve into an in-depth analysis of political development in pre-colonial Igboland, Yorubaland, and Hausaland, and to portray their respective administrative systems and supporting influence relations, as well as those at the centre of Nigeria,



it is pertinent to lay out the tools that one will need. Developed by Horowitz (2000) such tools are outlined below. These concepts “apply to the philosophy and election patterns in many divided societies, irrespective of differences in locations and conditions that created them, and which may not directly support political relations, such as party membership, strength of parties in the ethnic regions, or outcome of elections and regardless of whether the units exhibit great or little overall asymmetry between them” (Horowitz 2000: 291-292). The concept is centred on deliberate ‘reasoning’. It does not just emerge arbitrarily, nor is it made-up of only abstract list. They are embedded in a ‘scheme’ that encouraged the probing of specific “aspects of political relationship” in a multi-ethnic society. Horowitz (2000) used ‘ranking and non-ranking’ synonymously with ‘politics and stability’ in his discourse on ranking in ethnic group in conflict. The six ‘aspects of relationship structures between the three ethnic groups in Nigeria’ and whose probing is anchored in the H-R scheme of concepts or tools are as follows: (i) ‘influence of ethnic mindset on relations among the ethnic nationalities’, (ii) ‘inequalities among them in the power configuration of the country, (iii) structure of the country (iv) indigenisation of service in the ethnic nationalities, (v) ‘the manner in which members of the ethnic nationalities are recruited into positions in the national agencies’, (vi) ‘and the basis of marginalisation perceptions’.

The analysis of the administrative systems among the Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, and the imposed bureaucratic authority patterns of the Nigerian state will benefit from a detailed probing of the first and sixth aspects of ‘political relations’, and certainly the ‘influence of ethnic mindset on relations among the ethnic nationalities’ and ‘the basis of marginalisation perceptions’ by the contending ethnic nationalities. The probing of the ‘basis of legitimacy perceptions’ is bound to be inferential primarily because the result will certainly reflect on the previous five factors. The concepts that are embodied in the H-R scheme are bound to enhance this discussion in its entirety. This summary is strictly designed to articulate by definition the pattern of political relation as a set of asymmetric relations among non-hierarchically structured members of a national state that involves the direction of the ethnic units.

The following are three complimentary issues about the definition to mind. (i) The ‘ethnic nationality’ can be said to depict a group of indigenous people that may be classified as homogeneous and who exist as members and are perceived as ranked

in levels of seniority by age and position occupied within such community. This may be traditionally appropriated as a result of the internal hierarchical positions inherent in that society. (ii) There is bound to be 'political philosophy' in any ethnic nationality. (iii) "The philosophy of any ethnic group involves the definition of the group goals, the regulation of conduct of members of the ethnic group, and the allocation of responsibilities as well as the coordination of roles within such community (see Ejiogu 2004).

### **2.3.1 Influenced relation among unranked ethnic groups in a political field.**

The H-R scheme implies that political relations between diverse ethnic groups in any given society involve 'alliances' and alignments". In any given political environment the existence of association member by individuals who shares the same ethnic backgrounds co-note "direction", that is "the people are guarded by a common political philosophy of identity, and ultimately suggest the mechanism through which the group tend to utilise their resources in competing with others in the political field. The interactions that take place between the ethnic groups in the national political arena of Nigeria have certain components or 'dimensions' of alliance formation. The aggregate totals of those aspects or 'dimensions' of the interactions that take place between the contending political interests in Nigeria determine the level and scope of acceptance. All the three components of ethnic nationalities in Nigeria's project involve flows of "political influence and ethnic alliance" among the participating individuals and groups. This implies that, no single ethnic nationality is powerful enough, or has the political capacity to dominate the other two; and no single regional or ethnic oriented political party can control the national government alone.

## **2.4. Data and Their Sources**

The contemporary nature of the study dictates that it should be based on both primary and secondary sources, but mainly from primary sources through physical contact between the researcher and the participating individuals. We were able to identify several sources, which include opinion of people, written documents and analysis of events that fit that definition on all aspects of the lives of the three distinct ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria; and their political

cooperation were equally identified. Such primary sources and records were sorted into three categories of.

- (1.) Studies on the traditional structure of the three ethnic nationalities in the pre-colonial era,
- (2.) Studies on the pre-1999 democratic period, and the political relationship between the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani.
- (3.) Studies on the political development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2011, and how the roles of the three ethnic nationalities affect democracy in Nigeria.

*(i) Studies on the traditional structure of the three ethnic nationalities before 1960.*

We developed a chart to enable us to sort the available data on the three nationalities, see Appendix 2.1 below. There were works of several Scholars, early anthropological and some historical accounts of all kinds that were produced and gathered on and about the three ethnic nationalities. It includes secondary sources like the London International African Institute's Ethnographic Survey of Africa series, edited by Daryll Forde. The Ethnographic Survey of Africa series is a product of the colonial era. It contains monographs of the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study. Some examples as shown in Figure 1.1 above, and it includes: *Peoples of the Plateau Area of Northern Nigeria* and *Peoples of the Middle Niger Region of Northern Nigeria*, both by Harold D. Gunn, *Notes on the Tribes of Northern Nigeria* by O. Temple, *The Ibo and Ibibio Speaking Peoples of South-eastern Nigeria* by Forde and Jones, C. K. Meek's, *Ibo Village Affairs*, Samuel Johnson's *The History of the Yoruba*, G. T. Basden's *Niger Ibos*. They contained and conveyed also valuable information needed for a thorough analysis of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. The factors derived from the sources were used to assess the level of socio-cultural and political integration within and between the nationalities during the period before 1960.

*(ii) Studies on the pre 1999 democratic period, and the political relationship between the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani.*

Documents in this category include work of scholars like Arend Lijphart, Larry Diamond, Arthur Lewis, Julius Ihonvbere, Mbaku, Alex Gboyega, Adigun. A.B. Agbaje, Arthur Lewis. They all provided extensive data on different aspects of individuals and Party activities in the country, and as played by group and individuals from the three ethnic nationalities. I conducted series of interviews with many political personalities as well as non politicians across the three ethnic nationalities. I gathered relevant information on the many topical political issues and positions of the contending ethnic groups as represented by the politicians. They include events surrounding the democratic election of 1964, the 1979 national elections, as well as the 1992 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic democratic experiment under General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida.

*(iii) Studies on Political development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2011, and the role of the three ethnic nationalities in fostering democracy in Nigeria.*

Sources in this category include works by Larry Diamond, Alex Gboyega, Julius Ihonvbere, Laurence Whitehead, Chazan, Adigun. A.B. Agbaje and others that have written extensively on political development in Nigeria. Most of the works by these pioneer scholars are steeped in modernization theory. The works of scholars who reacted to studies by these earlier scholars and decided to locate their own contributions to the political development in Nigeria, with regard to the three ethnic nationalities include Larry Diamond's *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria*, Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere's *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic*, etc. Works that fall under this category of sources cover the entire range of theoretical perspectives. Appendix 2.1 below is a snapshot of some of the important sources of secondary data on the democratic performance of the country in the period under review.

Some of the sources of my secondary data	
National	International
1. The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria by Victor C Uchendu (1965).	1. Ethnic Groups in Conflict by Donald L. Horowitz (2000).
2. <i>The Igbo People and Europeans</i> by Elizabeth Isichei (1973).	2. The Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy by Anthony H. Birch (2007)
3. <i>Studies in Ibo Political Systems</i> by Ikenna Nzimiro (1972).	3. Democratization Theory and Experience by Laurence Whitehead (2002).
4. <i>The Origin of the Yoruba</i> by S. O. Biobaku (1955).	4. Democratization, a critical introduction by Jean Grugel (2002)
5. "Political Change and Adaptation in Yorubaland in the Nineteenth Century" by G. O. Oguntomisin (1981).	5. Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy by Larry Diamond, and Marc F. Plattner (1994)
6. Nigeria Struggle For Democracy and Good Governance by Adigun A B Agbaje, Larry Diamond, and Ebere Onwudiwe (2004)	6. Politics in West Africa by W. Arthur Lewis (1965)
7. Illusion of Power, Nigeria in Transition by Julius O. Ihonvbere and Timothy Shaw (1998)	7. "Islam and Social Stratification in Northern Nigeria" by E. R. Yeld (1960).
8. Nigeria: Conflict unresolved, by Alex Gboyega in I. William Zartman, Governance as Conflict Management, Politics and Violence in West Africa (1997).	8. Democratization. The State of the Art, by Dirk Berg-Schlosser (2007).
9. The Roots of Political Instability Amongst Indigenous Nationalities and in the Nigerian Supranational state, 1884-1990: A Longitudinal and Comparative Historical Study by Emmanuel C. Ejiogu (2004)	9. The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis by Robert E. Gooden and Charles Tilly (2008)

Appendix 2.1 showing some of my sources of secondary data.

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Only a selection of these sources is listed in this chapter. The bibliography is arranged in a deliberate manner aimed at presenting the sources of data in the three categories

#### 2.4.1.

#### **Process of Data Collection.**

The nature of this research topic made the process of data collection a bit complex. Because of the scanty nature of previous works related to the topic, sourcing of information was based significantly on the interactions between the Researcher and the several respondents who helped to make this work a reality. The process was based on arranged interviews with experts in Political Science in Nigeria. Though, it was not so easy to negotiate an interview appointment with many of them. This was able nonetheless to secure the consent and commitment of the so many experts both in the academic circle and outside the academic community.

Another set of experts who contributed immensely to this Research were some government officials. Despite the usual complex schedule of many of them, the Researcher still managed to elicit their commitments and contributions. Although not all the received interview approvals were successful, or able to commence at the agreed day or time, but this was earlier anticipated by the Researcher. Most Government officials do not control their time. It is rather their office engagements that control their time. So, most of the interview appointments that the Researcher secured from these officials, went through several rescheduling as well as a change of venue.

As previously anticipated, it was difficult to track down some of the top politicians in both the ruling Party and also among the opposition parties in Nigeria. The politicians this researcher had intended to interview and get their own side of the Nigerian politics were always mobile. Either they are attending a Party function or they are engaged in another Project, or they are out of town completely. So, it became an issue of not wholly believing in the possibility of meeting the man at home. In most cases, the researcher had to interview some of the political functionaries at occasions or gatherings. And sometimes the researcher had to ambush some of the politicians at their Offices, just to make sure that the agreed interview schedule did not skip, though the time no longer mattered. But in all it was more difficult to track down politicians, than to track down Professors in many Universities and institutes.

Another means of information gathering for this Study was through Focus-group interviews. This particular aspect of Information sourcing was done in two phases. The first phase was with University Students at four different University Campuses in

Nigeria. For the Students, it was very easy to locate people, who are willing not only to participate in the discussion, but people who are ready to argue out their positions with regard to the effect of “Ethnicity” and its features in Nigeria’s politics. Listening to the Students argue on the strength of their positions was very encouraging, since some of them will eventually end up in the government ministries as workers and some as Officials.

This phase of focus-group interview was conducted by the researcher at the University of Abuja, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Bayero University Kano, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, and University of Lagos, Institute of Management Technology Enugu, Federal College of Education Technical Enugu, all located within the three regions of Nigeria. The second phase of the focus-group interview was conducted amongst the ordinary people on the street. This second phase targeted the locals in the villages and slums in the cities. It was very easy to find people who showed interest in the topic of the research and so wanted to participate in the debate. This phase was by not only literates, but also by non literates. The debates were very interesting. It enables the researcher to compare and contrast the positions or points of argument of both the literates and that of non literates.

There is of course the distribution and use of Questionnaires as means of Information sourcing. The Questionnaire was so structured, that the respondent was able to understand it. It lacks every aspect of ambiguity, and so the respondents did not complain of conflict. However, the data collected was done through several methods of Information sourcing. This includes but not limited to open-ended questions through One on One Interviews, as well as focus-group Interviews, Close ended Questionnaires, Note taking, Video Recording, Audio recording and Transcribing of the recorded Information.

## **2.5. Reflecting the empirical field: how the field study shaped the view of the Researcher on how much difference Nigerians feel about each other.**

Considering the fact that this research Topic is relatively new and one of its kind in the political discussions on why democracy has not succeeded in Nigeria. The author had thought before the commencement of the study that Nigerians did have great deal of knowledge about the internal political chemistry of the country and particularly about the political capability and activity of each “Ethnic Nation” within the country.

But in the field, what the author met were people, who hardly accept or believe in other Nations within the country.

Besides, there are no practical measures, meant to douse the flaming smokes of ethnic bias in the polity. These deficiencies resulted in people having mixed feelings about the political intentions of each ethnic nationality within the country. The picture that some of the people who contributed in the discussions gave, projected the various ethnic group as self serving and self defending.

The point of argument always points to the ethnic group or Tribe of the very individual talking as against other ethnic nations or Tribes within Nigeria. However, this study was able to look at the indicators on the ground. These Indicators include the structure of the political parties, selection of candidates during elections, voting character of the three major ethnic groups under survey, Ethnic political agenda, Government developmental policies, as well as the impact on the populace.

#### **2.5.1. Locating my study within an epistemology: the Interpretation Paradigm.**

The natural geographical composition of Nigeria created in itself more problems than it intended to solve. But the question remains, is the problem associated with this natural phenomenon beyond what political compromise can resolve? There are debates going on at various fronts, both in the academic world and within Nigeria herself. It is on the account of this debate that this Thesis seeks to know the effect of ethnic mindset on the democratic politics in Nigeria, with her multi-ethnic structure. The emphasis is to know, why democracy has not succeeded in Nigeria, despite several attempts. This research study strives to establish the fundamental and ethnographic factors militating against the State of Nigeria, why these factors have prevented democracy from flourishing in Nigeria. To penetrate the individual local communities with the use of ethnographical sampling, in the bid to unlock the many hiccups working against Nigeria's political development. The Nigerian State was established with sets of objectives, procedures, and instruments designed to facilitate the generation of actions and results by the then colonial administration of the British Empire.

The Nigerian State was designed and anchored on the imagined dominance of the three ethnic nationalities to produce a triangular link, which in turn was intended to



bridge all generated political actions and economic results within the occupied colonial territories into a single cohesive Instrument (Schwarz jr. 1965). But since the departure of the white men from the country's political scene, the political intention of those who took control of the state thereafter has remained utopian dream.

Observations and assumptions of the country's political development, the role and position of the component ethnic nationalities on issues of National question remains unresolved, and opinions on what Nigeria is actually made of, vary widely. This development is owed no doubt to the ambiguity and controversy of a polity that is made up of supposed countries, moulded into one abstract and single country. Then each ethnic nation is naturally endowed with a fixed border, separating it from other existing nations within the country. By this emerged an extensive and sharp theoretical difference boosted by the argument whether a group of naturally supposedly independent states can accept to forgo their individual features, even though they were neither consulted, nor their consent sought, nor were they at the Table, when decisions about them were made.

In many academic circles in Nigeria, and from the contributions of many Scholars, it is generally argued that the different ethnic nationalities within the State of Nigeria can not have common national political philosophy, because they are naturally endowed States within an abstract State. Some people also argued that the Nigerian State rarely possessed capable acts, decisive enough to meander and to permeate the various traditional philosophies of the contending ethnic groups, or that the country Nigeria does not simply exist in democratic terms, or that despite its natural, cultural diversity and nominal political power the Nigerian State is but just a paper tiger. If all these assumptions should be followed, it then meant that; the absence of a natural factor in the definition of Nigeria as a State means that the political development and Inter-ethnic co-operation will likely remain limited and fragmented.

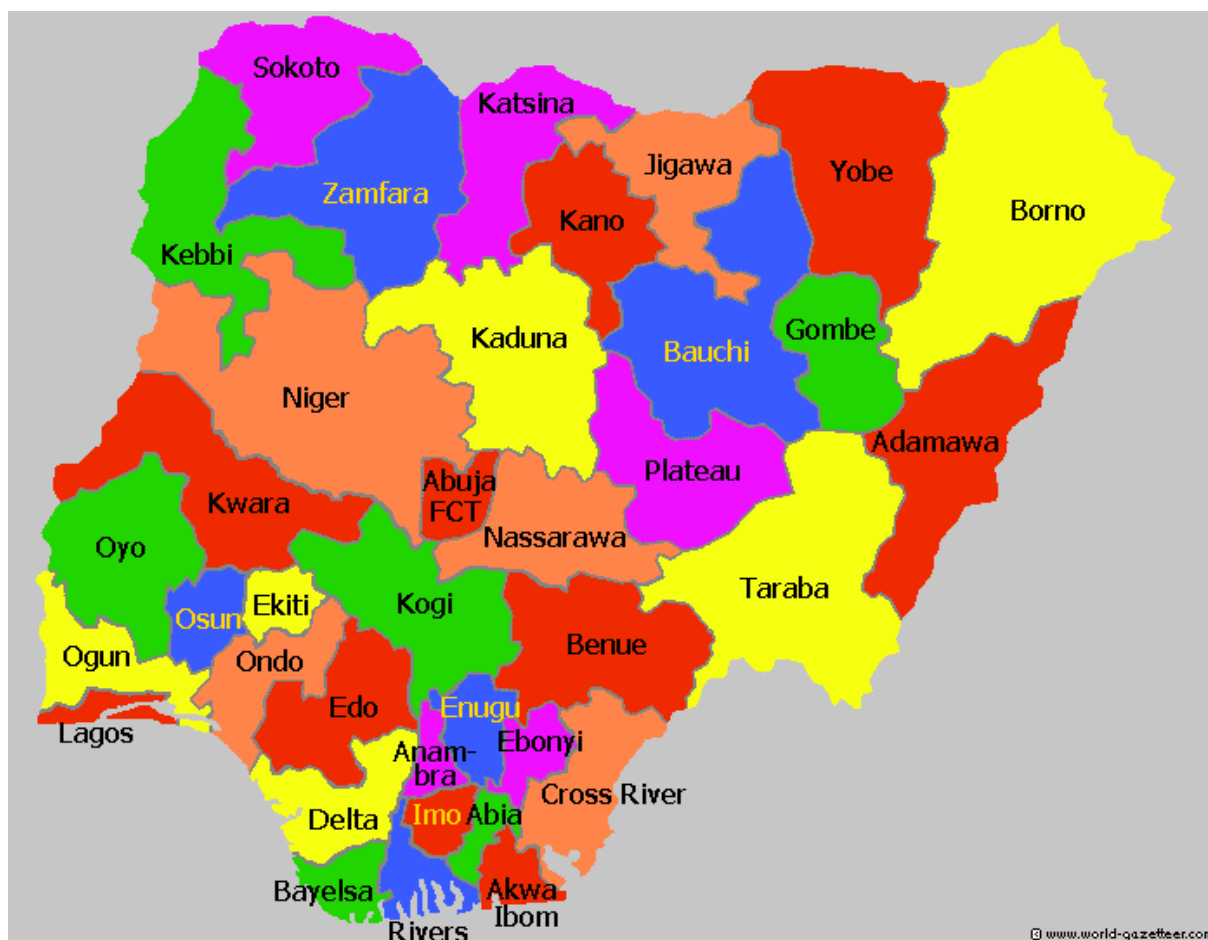
How does someone then know when the democratic politics has political impact on Nigeria? Conventional knowledge based on Interest negotiation and balance of political power suggests that issues on political domination, marginalisation and relevance, are better resolved through compromise (Horowitz 1996). The Nigerian state and the ethnic nationalities emerged from different historical origins and answer to different sets of political needs, interests, and do not have the same assets, capabilities, and levers of internal political influence at their disposal. They have

different institutional, Constitutional, and legal personalities, and have different degrees of public accountability and legitimacy that determine what each want for itself.

It is out of these salient issues that this “Doctoral Thesis” is based upon. Thereby drawing optimism from the various positions and interpretations derived from several presentations generated from individuals within the researched ethnic nations in Nigeria. The Author uses these politically minded derived opinions to find out why and in what degree the negative ethnic Mindset of the people from the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani affects democracy in Nigeria.

### Chapter 3. **Geography of Nigeria.**

Nigeria is in the African continent. It is easily the continents largest country in terms of population. The country is often referred to as the 'Giant of Africa'. Nigeria is situated in the West Coast of Africa. It lies between 3 and 14 degrees East Longitude and 4 degrees North Latitude. It occupies an area 933,768 square Kilometres. The longest distance East-West is 767 Kilometres and the longest distance North-South is 1,605 Kilometres. Four countries and the Atlantic Ocean share boundary with Nigeria. To the West is the Republic of Benin, to the East is the Republic of Cameroon, to the South is the Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea), which provides sea route to Europe and the Americas and to the North are the Republics of Chad and Niger<sup>1</sup>. See Figure 3 below for more illustrations.



Map 3.1 showing the 36 Nigerian Federal States and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) (sources. [www.world-gazetteer.com](http://www.world-gazetteer.com)).

1. N.P. Illoeje (2007), A New Geography of Nigeria, Longman Nigerian Plc, Lagos

### 3.1.

#### **Climate**

The climate of Nigeria is equatorial and semi-equatorial and it is characterised by high temperature (25°C-40°C), high humidity and heavy rainfall in the most parts of the country. Generally, climatic conditions decline from south to the north, with higher humidity and heavier rainfall in the south than in the north. There are two main seasons in Nigeria: the rainy or wet season and the dry or Harmattan season. The rainy season begins from April and ends in October with a dry spell August. The average annual rainfall is about 70" in the West, 170" in the East; 50" in the Central parts of the country and about 20" in the North. The dry season spans between November and March. There is the brief period of cool and dry weather lasting about One Month in the South usually between December/January and about Four Months in the North between October/January. Generally, the wet season is longer in the South than the north while the dry season is longer in the north than the south. The humid tropical climate provides abundant solar and water energy resources, which can be profitably exploited<sup>2</sup>.

#### 3.1.1.

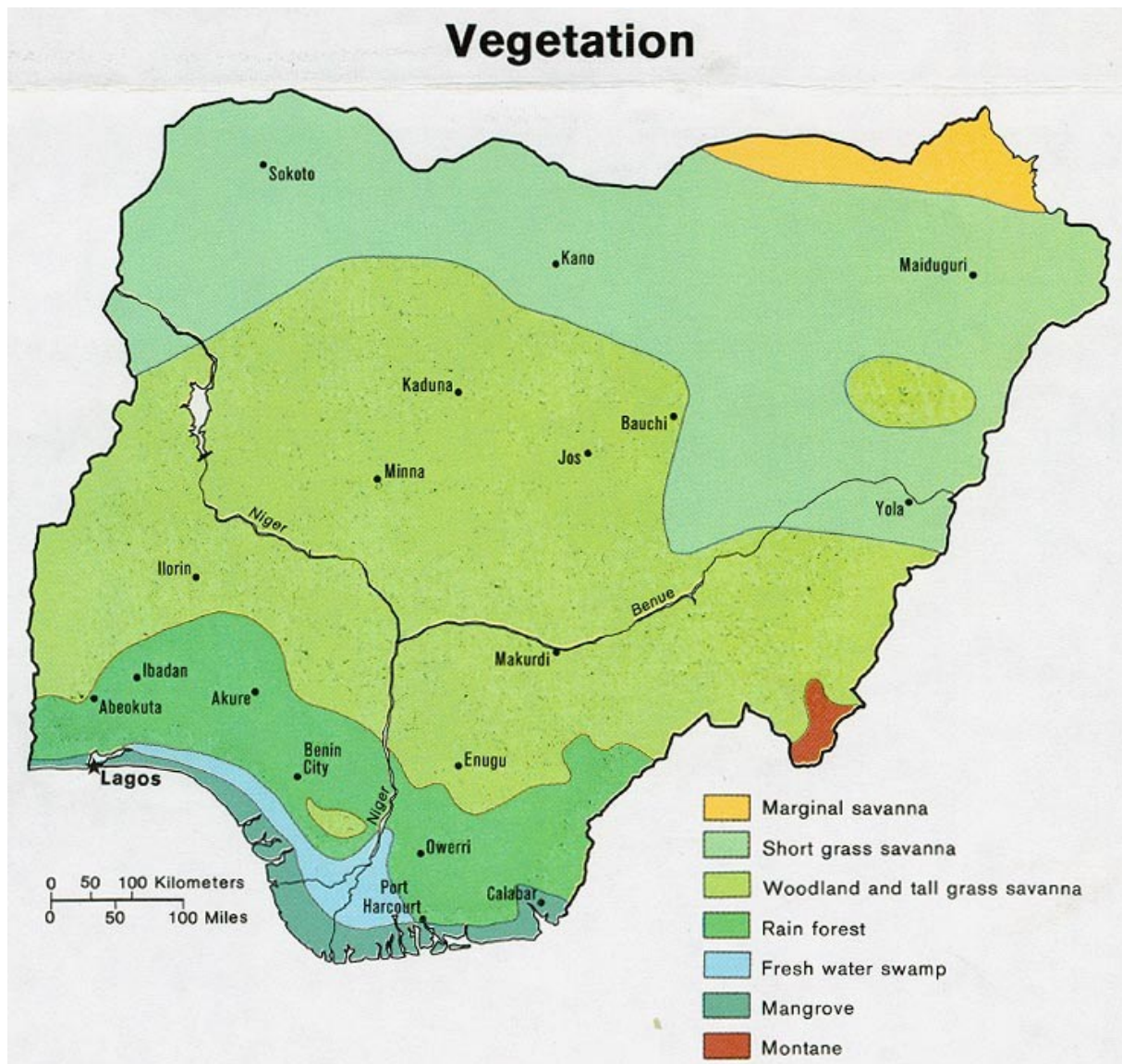
##### **Vegetation.**

Nigeria has a variety of vegetation belts. The four main ones are the swamp forest, rain forest, and Savannah and mountain grassland. The swamp forest is located at the coastal and river-line areas of the country and are characterised by Mangrove trees, palm trees, Mahogany and Abora, these are Tree species common in the tropical forest regions. Beyond the swamp forest lie successive belts of tropical rain forest that break into a more open woodland with hilly ranges and the undulating plateau with hills of granite and sand stones rising from 609.6 metres on the average to 1.828 metres eastwards. Midway of the country the vegetation is grassland interspersed with trees and shrubs, which finally terminate in the Sahel Savannah region of the semi-arid North East. Nigeria is rich in tropical hardwoods and other forest resources<sup>3</sup>. See map 3.1. Below.

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2. N.P. Iloeje (2007), A New Geography of Nigeria, Longman Nigeria Plc, Lagos.

3. N.P. Iloeje (2007), A New Geography of Nigeria, Longman Nigeria Plc, Lagos.



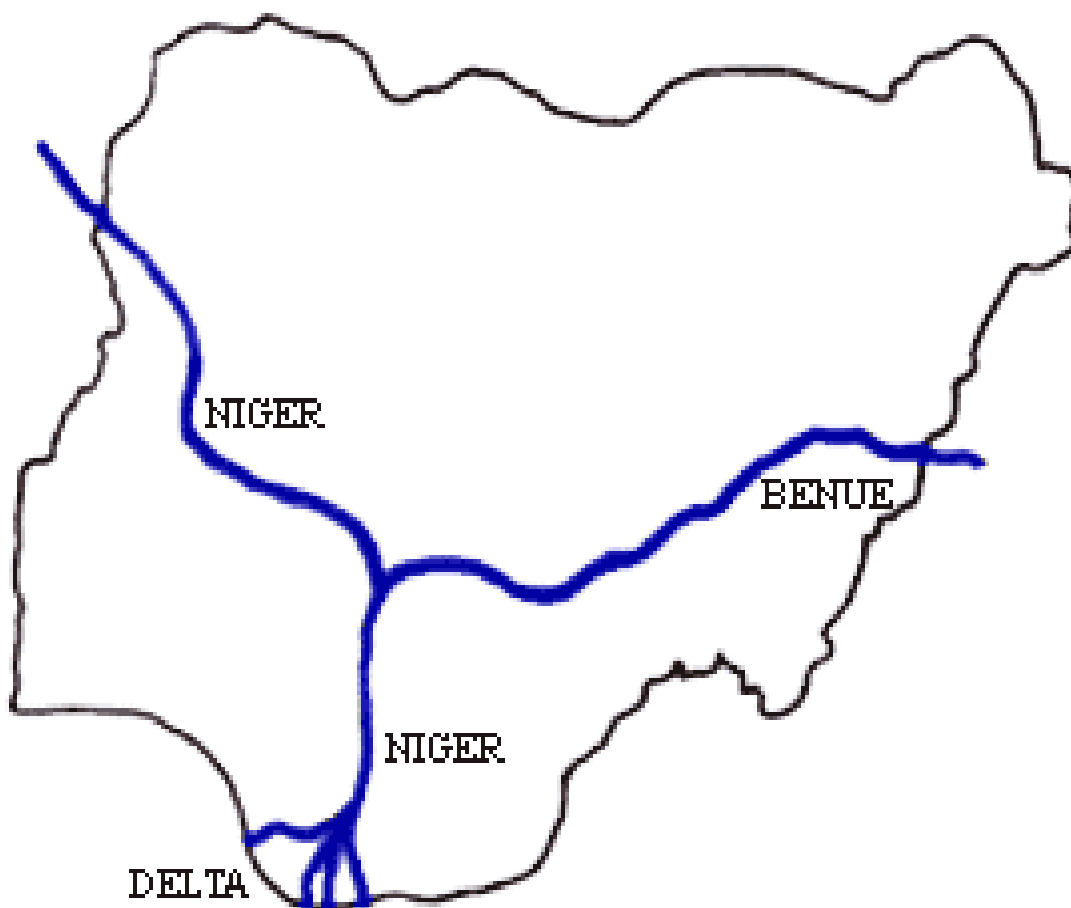
Map 3.2: showing vegetation belts covering the various ethnic homelands in Nigeria. (source. [www.lib.utexas.edu](http://www.lib.utexas.edu))

### 3.1.2. **Rivers.**

There are so many important rivers in Nigeria, but the two major ones are Rivers Niger and Benue (see map 3.2 below). River Niger is Africa's third largest river. It has a length of 4,184 Kilometres but the first two thirds of the length flows outside Nigeria, leaving only 1,746 Kilometres into the country. The Niger River rises from the Fouta Djallon Mountains in the East of Sierra Leone and enters Nigeria from the northwest. It meets the other major river, River Benue, at the confluence town of Lokoja from where the two of them flow southwards for about 547 Kilometres into the Atlantic

Ocean in the Gulf of Guinea. River Niger has its tributaries, namely, the Sokoto, Kaduna and Anambra Rivers.

The Benue has a length of 796.5 Kilometres. It rises from Republic of Cameroon and receives the Katsina-Ala and Gongola Rivers. The other important rivers in Nigeria are Sokoto River, which is 627.5 Kilometres long; Kaduna River, which is 547.1 Kilometres long; and Gongola River, which is 530.9 Kilometres long. Others are Yobe, Hadejia (329.8 kilometres); Benin, Imo, Anambra, Cross River, Osse, Ogun, and Osun Rivers. The rivers provide enormous hydroelectric power and marine resources as well as great transportation and irrigation potentials. A Dam is situated in the River Niger, which supplies the nation and most of the neighbouring West African countries electricity<sup>4</sup>.



Map 3.3, showing the sources of the two rivers, Niger and Benue, and its downward flow through the delta tributaries to Atlantic Ocean (source motherlandnigeria.com)

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4. N.P.Iloeje (2007), A New Geography of Nigeria, Longman Nigeria Plc, Lagos

It has been said that the Usman Danfodio Empire or the Sokoto Caliphate was “Supra-regional,” that it straddled several hundreds of Kilometres and coincided with just one region. To make such a claim is to assume that Regions have objective definition. The ethnic nationalities in Nigeria may in fact have had a spatial conceptualisation of their various Homelands. This conceptualisation could be based on the centre-periphery schema; a radical web with traditional Institutions as the case may be at the hub.

To fully grasp certain knowledge about the many problems that often arises from the effort of establishing political stability in a politically unstable environment, especially that which derived from distinct as well as different nationalities demands that someone need to appreciate at first the different characteristics of the constituent nationalities

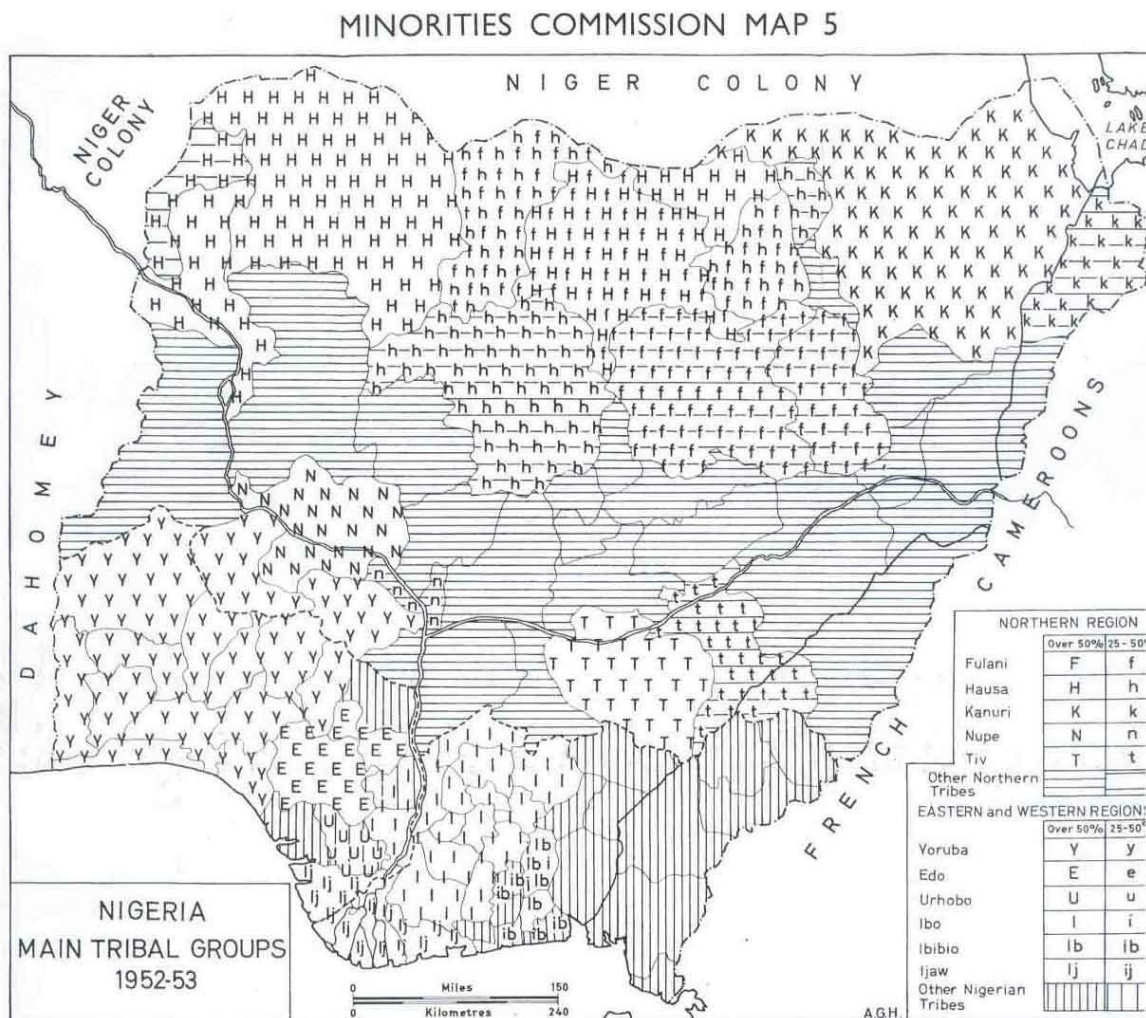
However the need to engage in such an endeavour is significantly important, especially in situations where the effort in establishing an enduring, and stable polity was through a bequeathed alien political order and which did not solicit for the input of those nationalities within such environment.

In the case of the three ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, one can trace some of the differences that exist between them through the geographical differences, and which kept them apart in the environment. The geography of the three ethnic homelands contributed immensely to the gulf that existed between inhabitants of the areas (Schwarz 1965: 3-5), (see Map 1.1. in the previous chapter).

However there are other obvious differences that one can observe or link to these differences. Mostly through the type of society, their customs and traditions, and the nature of administrative patterns in place and as practiced in each one of them prior to Independence. The three ethnic nationalities that formed the foundation of Nigerian state, have their homeland hundred of miles away from each other, and the ethnic nationalities inhabit their areas separately, as each tribal group is sandwiched by another minority ethnic nationality. (See Maps 3.3, and 3. 4 below).

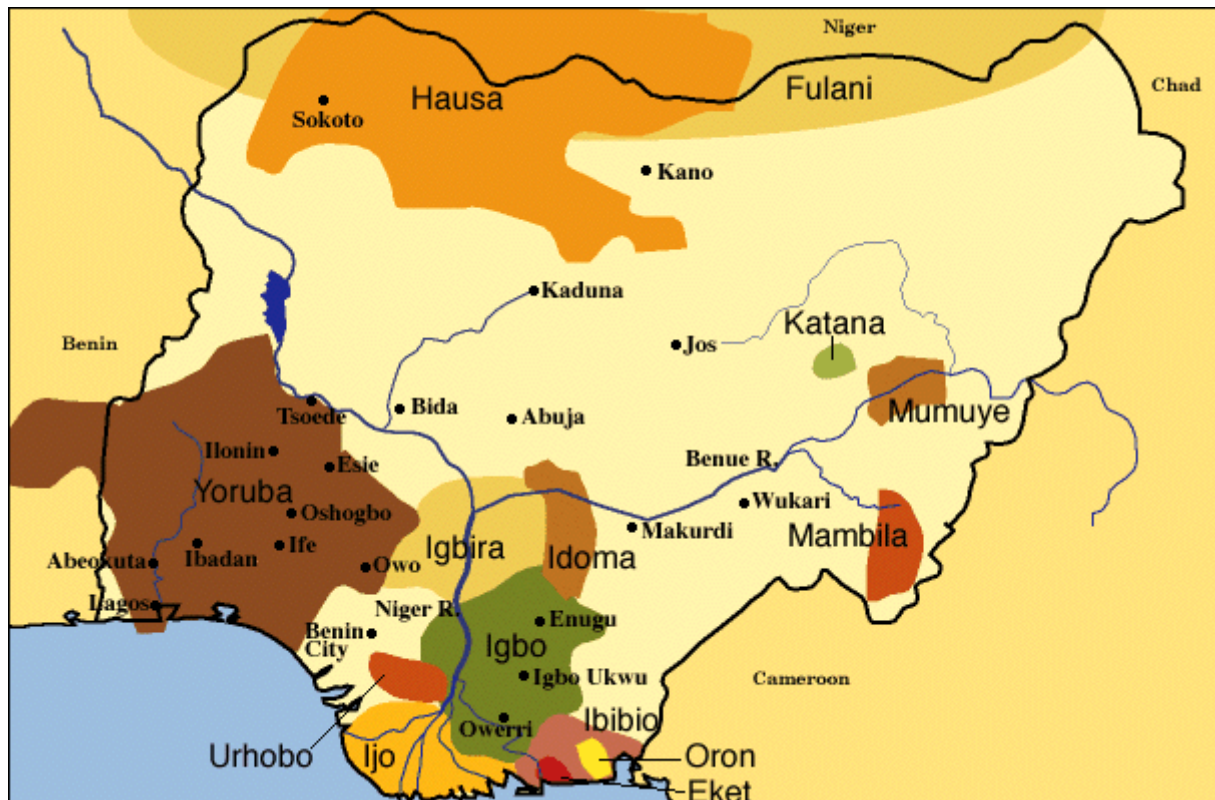


## Map of Colonial Nigeria (1957-58) Showing Major Ethnic Groups and Minority Areas



Map 3.4. Showing the three ethnic nationalities separated from each other by minority groups.  
(Source [www.waado.org](http://www.waado.org))



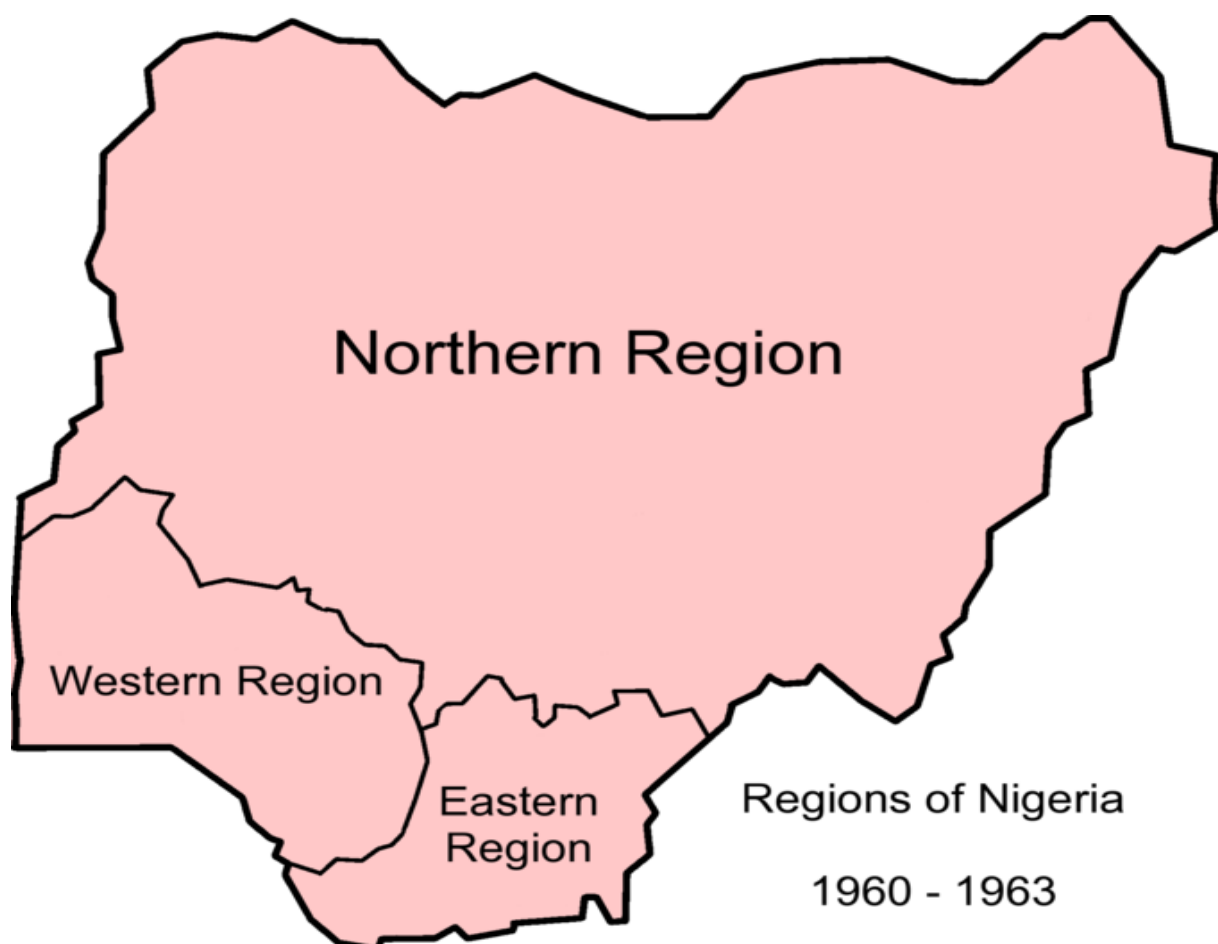


Map 3.5. Showing the ancestral homelands of the ethnic nationalities and also the distance between them (source. [www.nairaland.com](http://www.nairaland.com))

By an action that can best be described as an act of natural separation, the areas inhabited by the three tribal groups is partitioned into separate geographic areas (Schwarz 1965). Certainly, the partitioning of the three tribal nations into separate regions helped significantly in entrenching the existing political gulf in a way that prepared her inhabitants to rightly view and regard each other as distinct.

However, the three ethnic nationalities defined the area they inhabited as their own ancestral *homelands*. The three partitioned ancestral *homelands* have specific geographical features that divide members of the ethnic nationalities and demarcate their homelands from their neighbours' ancestral *homeland*. The geography of the Nigerian state provided a nature given resource needed for an unsolicited division of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. Nevertheless, the pre-colonial state building and British colonial conquest produced the straw that disrupted and opened up some of the natural barriers that separate the three ethnic nationalities. (See Map 3.3. above). In the same vein, the arbitrary annexation of the ethnic *homelands*, particularly the 1914 amalgamation of the three ethnic nationalities into an artificial polity, without recourse to their established differences,

created artificial state with no tangible network of political reality. In their bid to create an enabling environment for their administrative convenience, the British colonial government carved some areas from Yorubaland and also certain communities within Hausaland into areas of French colonial interest in the eastern part of the country, and also around the upper Mambila plateau around the northern boundary of today's Cameroon. Some Igbo communities west of river Niger known today in Nigeria as Anioma (good land), and some areas within Ijawland were moved into an administrative arrangement classified as Western region. The carved communities were merged with the rest of Yorubaland. The remainder of communities and some other smaller tribal communities that live in the southeast of the country were equally merged into an administrative setup called the Eastern region. The smaller tribes of Ijaw, Efik, and Ibibio were merged with her Igbo neighbours. See map 3.5 below.



Map 3.6. Showing the three regional territories of the ethnic nationalities (source, en.wikipedia.org)

However in the northern region of Nigeria, where traditional leadership and cultural relationship developed between two previously and separate nationalities, the Hausa and the Fulani created a different scenario. The Emirate council and cultural assimilation that evolved between the Hausa and the Fulani was largely as a result of the geology of the area. The large portion of the area is savannah grassland. So, there was no natural hindrance or restriction of movement for the peoples within the area. As it turned out to be, after the departure of the British from the country, the created artificial administrative structures proved to lack political cohesion.

The geography of the area covering the three ethnic nationalities is highly significant for not only the history of the areas, but also for the political advancement of the people under study. The southern region of the country comprises the areas southeast of the River Niger as it enters the Atlantic Ocean and the areas southwest of the Niger River also as it connects to Atlantic Ocean. The southern region of the country consists of four separate vegetation belts. The Mangrove swamps covered areas around the delta tributaries of the River Niger. The Delta tributaries provide channels through which the River Niger connects to the Atlantic Ocean. The Evergreen and thick rainforest belt began from the northern portion of the mangrove swamps in the delta region. The evergreen and thick rain-forest belt is followed by the deciduous forest region that thins down and becomes mostly grassland, which then joins up smoothly with the areas with mostly savannah Vegetation. (See map 3.6 above)

From about the 18th century, the Hausa-Fulani expansion moved to the southern limit of the Islamised Northern Nigeria. Then, the Sokoto Caliphate of Usman Danfodio Empire which was a product of the Islamic Jihad gave birth to another area of influence in the South western border towns around present day federal states of Kwara and Kogi. This Islamised geographical area with feudal political and aristocratic mentality, frequently refers to itself as “Northern Region.”(See map 3.6 above). With the collapse of the central authority of the then Northern part of Oyo Empire, and the migration of Hausa-Fulani tribes into the conquered area, a territorially based power was created. However the territorial entity structured itself along political units based on Islamic concepts. They organised themselves around a warlord, who ruled from a fortified dwelling.

By his forceful conquest of the areas and people around him, the concept of Usman Danfodio Empire came to designate a geographical and ideological space coterminous with that of Islamic Teaching. From the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth centuries the expansion of Islam promoted a strong definition and distinction of the Northern part of Nigeria from other regions in today's Nigeria, and the Hausa-Fulani political identity was achieved largely by defining an opposite.

This definition and distinction simply classified the Hausa-Fulani as those who were not infidels. By the nineteenth century the forceful spread of Islam produced a relatively homogeneous belief system from the Sudan Savannah to the Guinea Savannah areas of today's Nigeria and from Kebbi within the Kanta Kontar former Empire in the far North West to the Kanuri Empire in the far North East of Nigeria<sup>5</sup>.

**The Graphic structure of Nigeria and the three major components units.**

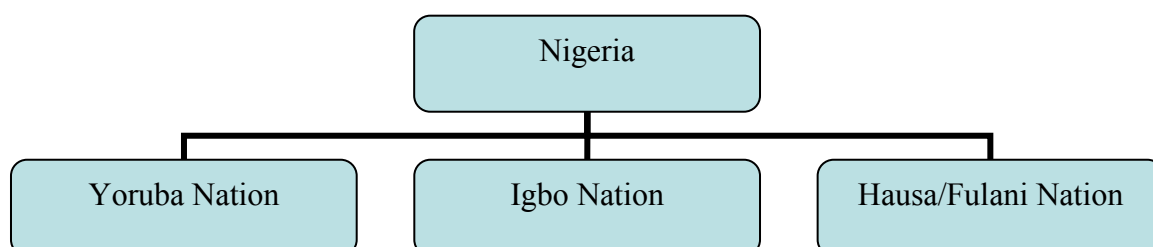


Table 3.1. A Diagram Illustrating the structure of the Three Ethnic Nations in Nigeria.

5. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

### 3.3.1. **People**

Nigeria is blessed with a large population with diverse backgrounds. This ethnic difference is what formed the basis of her national Pledge “Unity in Diversity”.

### 3.3.2. **Hausa-Fulani**

The Hausa-Fulani occupy the northern part of Nigeria. They are the dominant ethnic group in the northern part. They are found predominantly in Sokoto, Kano, Kaduna and Bauchi States, and in large concentrations in some parts of Plateau, Adamawa and Taraba States<sup>6</sup>.

### 3.3.3.. **Yoruba.**

The Yoruba occupy the south western part of Nigeria. They are noted for settling in large concentrations, the Yoruba lay claim to a common ancestor, Oduduwa. They are found in Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ekiti and Ondo States, and parts of Edo and Kwara States as well as in the neighbouring Benin Republic. Besides, references to such groups as the Egba-Yoruba, Ijebu-Yoruba or Ekiti-Yoruba, the Yoruba do not have significant differences<sup>7</sup>.

### 3.3.4. **Igbo.**

The Igbo (Ibo) live in the south eastern part of Nigeria. Their main domains are Enugu, Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Imo and large parts of Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Benue and Cross River States. There are some peculiar sub-groups amongst them such as: the Aros of Arochukwu, the Bams of East Bende, Wawa people of Enugu district, the Ezza of Abakaliki, the Ngwa people of Aba and the Anioma people of Delta<sup>8</sup>.

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6. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

7. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

8. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

### 3.4. **Other Ethnic Groups in Nigeria.**

Nigeria being one of the most complex countries in the World has many ethnic groups. Each ethnic group occupies a particular geographical area. Apart from the three major ethnic groups, there are other groups living side by side with each other<sup>9</sup>.

#### 3.4.1. **The Central Plateau Areas of Nigeria.**

This Region has diverse groups of people amongst whom are; the Kajes and the Mupunis predominantly in Kafanchan province, Kaduna State; the Angas (with some sub-groups), in the northern part of Jos plateau; the Birom with other smaller subgroups such as Aten, Irigwe, Rububa and Anaguta.

They are found in large concentrations in Jos and Jema'a division of Plateau State. Other groups to the east of the region include the Ngizems to the north of Potiskum, the Beddes in the north eastern parts of Katagum, and the Mangas in the Nguru region and the border area with Niger Republic<sup>10</sup>.

#### 3.4.2. **The North East borderland area of Nigeria.**

This area covers the north eastern parts of Borno and Taraba States, and is contiguous with Cameroon territory. The region is sparsely populated but it is characterised with pockets of ethnic groups some of which spread across the border of Nigeria into Cameroon Republic. Some of the groups in the region include the Shaw, a genetic Arab people, in the eastern part of Borno. Next to the Kanuris, they constitute the second largest ethnic group in Borno State; the Mobbers of lower Yobe valley and the Kanembus in the Lake Chad region (Kukawa district); the Gamergu of the middle Yedseram valley; the Margis, and the Kilbas in Adamawa province; the

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9. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

10. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

Pabirs and the Buras, in parts of Bornu and Adamawa province; the Bachama and the Mbula in Numan Division, Chamba and Dakka in Shetshi Mountains, the Mambillas on Mambilla Plateau, the Bata speaking people of Yola; and Varre- on Verre Hills, south of Yola<sup>11</sup>.

#### 3.4.3. **The Middle Niger Region of Nigeria.**

This region is inhabited by a mixed group of people, who have become mixed up as result of migration from different directions during the last one hundred years. Besides the nomadic Hausa-Fulani who are also found in this region the other communities include the Gungawa a river line people on the banks and islands of the River Niger between Gewi and Bussa with large concentration on the fertile flood plains at Yelwas; Lopawa also a river line group along with Gungawas; the Kamberi an upland people found in Kontagora and Bussa Emirates, as well as in parts of Bornu Division. There are Gwari people also an upland group who inhabited Western Zaria province and Minna; Abuja and Nassarawa areas of central Nigeria; the Shangawa and the Bariba.<sup>12</sup>

#### 3.4.4. **The Middle Belt or North Central of Nigeria.**

This region covers the Niger Benue in the heart of Nigeria. Large parts of the region are sparsely populated. The ethnic groups in the region include the Nupe. This group is found in Niger State in the Niger Valley below Jebba. Their main city is Bida; the Tiv is another large group in the middle Belt who live in scattered homesteads in the heart of Benue State with large concentration in the Gboko area; the Igbiras are found in the Niger-Benue confluence with large concentration in Jebba and Okene; Igalas are found around Ankpa and Dekina areas; another group is the Basanges found largely east of Okene especially in the Ajaokuta area and the Idoma group is found in Oturkpo region especially in the area north of Nsukka<sup>13</sup>.

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11. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

12. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, the University Press)

13. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)

#### 3.4.5.

#### **The Niger Delta.**

In this area the prominent ethnic groups include: the Bini an Edo speaking group found in Benin City and its environs. Others are the Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Isoko, Ika-Igbo, Ogoni, Andoni, Ikwerre, Kalabari, Ibanis (or Ubanis) from Bonny, and a cocktail of other distinct cultural groups<sup>14</sup>.

#### **3.5. The Natural Fragmentation of Nigeria's Landscape and People.**

The Nigerian State is one that is naturally characterised through non human establishments. Each of the Tribes within the geographical environment of Nigeria has a nature given feature that distinguished her from others. Beginning from the landscape, the physical appearance of the people, and down to the Language spoken, no two Tribes share the same natural features. Map 1, in chapter 1 illustrates the very structure of Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani through linguistic differences in Nigeria.

##### *(i). The Mangrove Swamps Vegetation Belt*

According to Anene, those who live within the mangrove swamps areas along the River Niger tributaries, as it enters the Atlantic Ocean, exploited the natural resources in the area to develop their trade and administrative institutions in significant measure (Anene 1966).

The tribal groups with ancestral homelands in the mangrove swamps include the Ijaw, the Kalabari, the Efik, the Ibeno, the Ogoni, and the Itsekiri. The peoples of this area are predominantly fishermen and traders (Anene 1966). Talbot (1926: 317) classified fishing and trading as the significant activities in the region, and they stood also as the two areas that nourished the economies of the tribal groups that live within Niger delta tributaries. However the resources within the mangrove Vegetation Belt provided the different tribal groups within the area with the resources which they used to create trade links with their immediate neighbours. This development took place before the middle of the fifteenth century when the first Europeans made contact with the people resident along the coast of today's Nigeria. Ukwu (1967: 655), Alagoa (1971: 269).

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14. Amaechi, Obiakor (ed) (1999), *The History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, The University Press)



The Efik tribal group organised their communities under a city state structure. It is an administrative structure that can best be described as republic. The administration of each city state was placed under the control of the Ekpe society. The Ekpe society combined the function of the Executive, Judiciary and legislative (Anene 1966). The Ibeno people on the other side established and structured the governance of the city-states within their homelands under monarchy. The Ibeno people organised their city-state structure under 'House-system'. The formation of a city state was structured from a consortium of many Houses. A House head or chief and his subordinate chiefs administer each House within the city state structure (Anene 1970).

The creation or certification of a House is usually through amalgamation of families of freemen, and the slaves under the control of such families. The structure of the House system is such that a slave could also become the leader of the House. This happened when a slaved person regained back his right of freedom from his Master. So, the structure is not rigid or strict in admittance of membership. Then, a free slave has the freedom, as well as the liberty to build his own House and become the head of a House within the Ibeno administrative pattern.

According to the custom of the Ibeno tribal community, the Head of each formed city-state stand as the overall leader of such city state within the tribal community. Such overall head doubles also as the spiritual and permanent leader of the city state (Anene 1966). Among the several city states within the Ibeno tribal homeland, the city state of Bonny was the most prominent. The administration of the city state was so structured that it has all the House heads, as well as the Priests as part of the administrative organ, though they served in advisory capacities. According to the historical account of Anene, the King of Bonny has final say in all issues that is of national concern to the city states. This ranged from trade and markets, wars and the conduct of wars (Anene 1966: 10). Anene further narrates that the King directs markets and trade, and he discharged his administrative responsibilities through the support and advice of the advisory council. According to the historical account of Anene (1966), the influence and authority of the King held the balance in the monarchical city state administrative structure in Bonny.

*(ii) The Tropical rainforest vegetation Belt.*

The tropical rainforest vegetation belt stretches across the southern part of the country, from east to west. The Belt covers the greater part of Ogun, Ondo, and southern Edo, Delta, Imo, Akwa Ibom, and southern part of Cross River state. There are other smaller tribal groups within this belt, like the Ekoi, the Yakoro, the Akunakuna, the Iyala, the Uwet, and the Uyanga. The location of the tribal groups and their ancestral *homelands* is shown in Map 1.1 in chapter 1.

The nature of administrative patterns and structures through which the tribal groups in the coastal areas of the south east administered their city-states was very different to that operated by their northern neighbours, the Igbo. However, the Igbo ethnic group in the pre-colonial time unlike the Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani did not engage in war of territorial conquest. According to the historical narration of Isichei, the various communities within the Igbo ancestral homeland prefers to migrate to another area just in a bid to avoid war with any opposing or aggressive neighbour. Most communities do migrate across a river, stream or to an area with any visible natural barriers that is capable of protecting them from the attacking hostile neighbour (Isichei 1973). Territorial conquest was never a means for community expansion by the Igbo. Instead of conquest, the Igbo communities that fear attack from a hostile neighbour often move away (Jones 1961).

Another set of ethnic nationalities living within the Rainforest belt is the Yoruba of the southwest of Nigeria. They have their ancestral homeland in the area southwest of the River Niger. Then apart from the Yoruba, other nationalities in the southwest of the River Niger include the Edo or the Binis, as well as the Itsekiri, and Urhobo peoples. All the mentioned tribal groups operate monarchical administrative patterns. In each of the established Kingdoms in the area, the administration is usually headed by the *Oba* or King. Within the Yoruba nation, the Kingdoms were organised under various notable monarchical states (Smith 1969).

*(iii) The Savana Vegetation Belt*

This is the most widespread vegetation belt, not only in Nigeria, but in the whole of Africa. The vegetation belt runs east-west across the country from the latitude of Ibadan in the south west to that of Zaria in the north. It covers all the middle belt

states of central Nigeria. Out of the several tribal groups inhabiting this part of the country, the Hausa, the Fulani, the Kanuri, the Nupe, the Gwari and Birom are the most dominant. The area is mostly semi-arid grassland. However, the Hausa and the Fulani peoples forged over the years into one socio-cultural community through war of conquest and expansion, and also through marriage and other culturally influenced features like language, and religion. It is this cultural fusion between the Hausa and the Fulani that translated to the descriptive form of the group as Hausa-Fulani. Historically, and according to Anene account, before the Hausa and the Fulani peoples became culturally unified, the Hausa had established their own city states. But these established city states were conquered by the invading Fulani warriors during the Fulani *jihad* of 1804 led by Uthman Danfodio (Anene 1970).

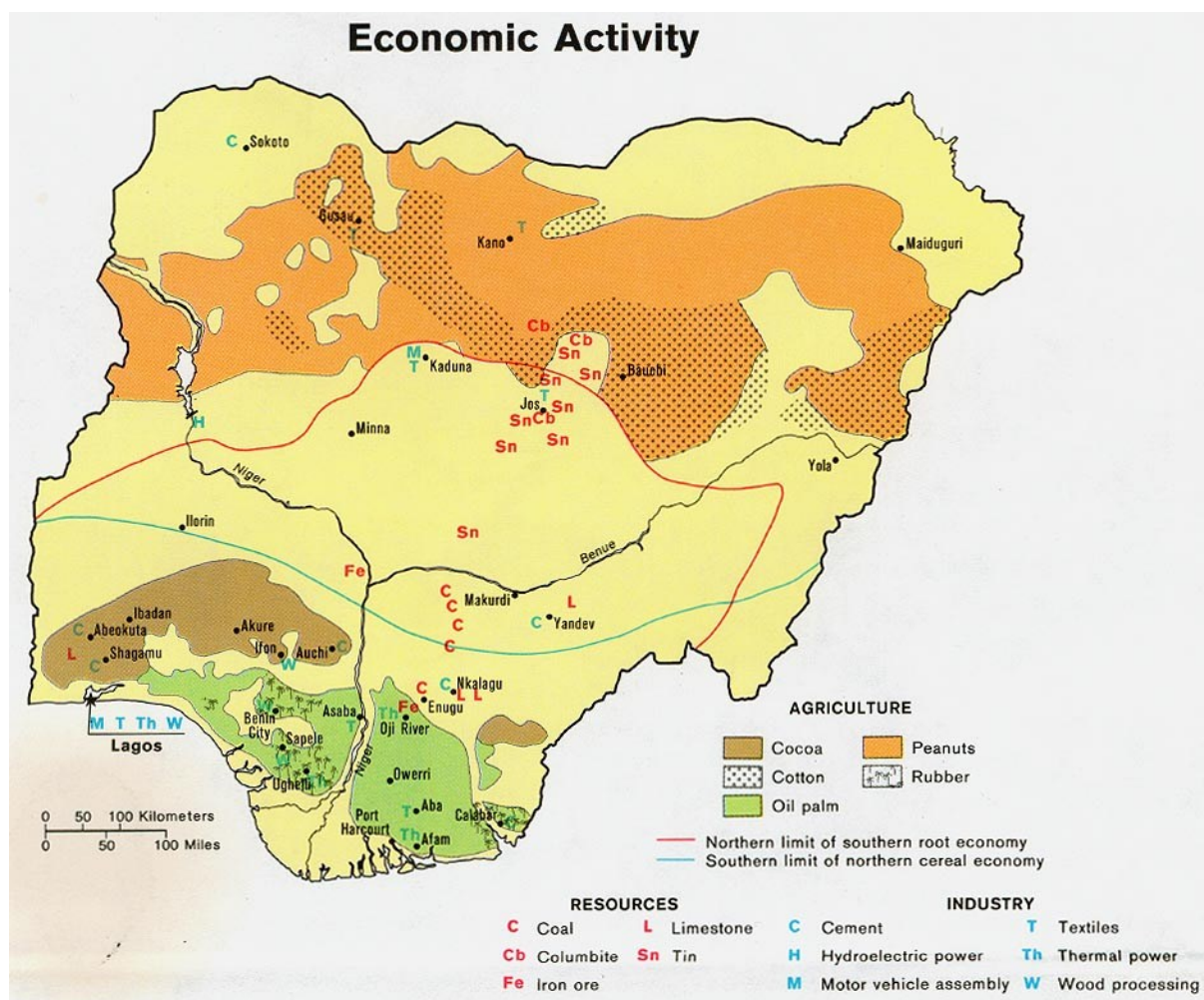
The Soil texture and Landscape in the different ethnic homelands in Nigeria differs from each other. The soil texture found in each ethnic homeland supports particular crops and agricultural produce. There are different soil types in the country, depending on the area one found himself or herself.

In the Eastern region, the soil texture is partly acidic and partly alluvial. This is because of the forest nature of the region. Whereby leaves and decayed remnants of Trees decomposed to fertilise and replenish the soil, with the heavy annual rainfall. Because of the soil texture, people use different types of Farm inputs to farm their lands. The Igbo people, who inhabit the region farm mostly in Yam (A Tuber common in Sub-Saharan Africa), Palm product, Cassava Flour (Tapioca usually processed into a powder like form called Garri), Groundnut, different species of Vegetable leaves, different Fruits<sup>15</sup>.

In the Northern region of the Hausa-Fulani, the soil is more sandy and with soft texture. Vegetables are the common farm produce by the people of this region. The people farm mostly Sorghum, Millet, Maize, Tomato, Groundnut, Beans and Cotton. As well as Cattle rearing by the Fulani Nomads, who wander with their Cattle around open Grass Lands in the region.<sup>16</sup>

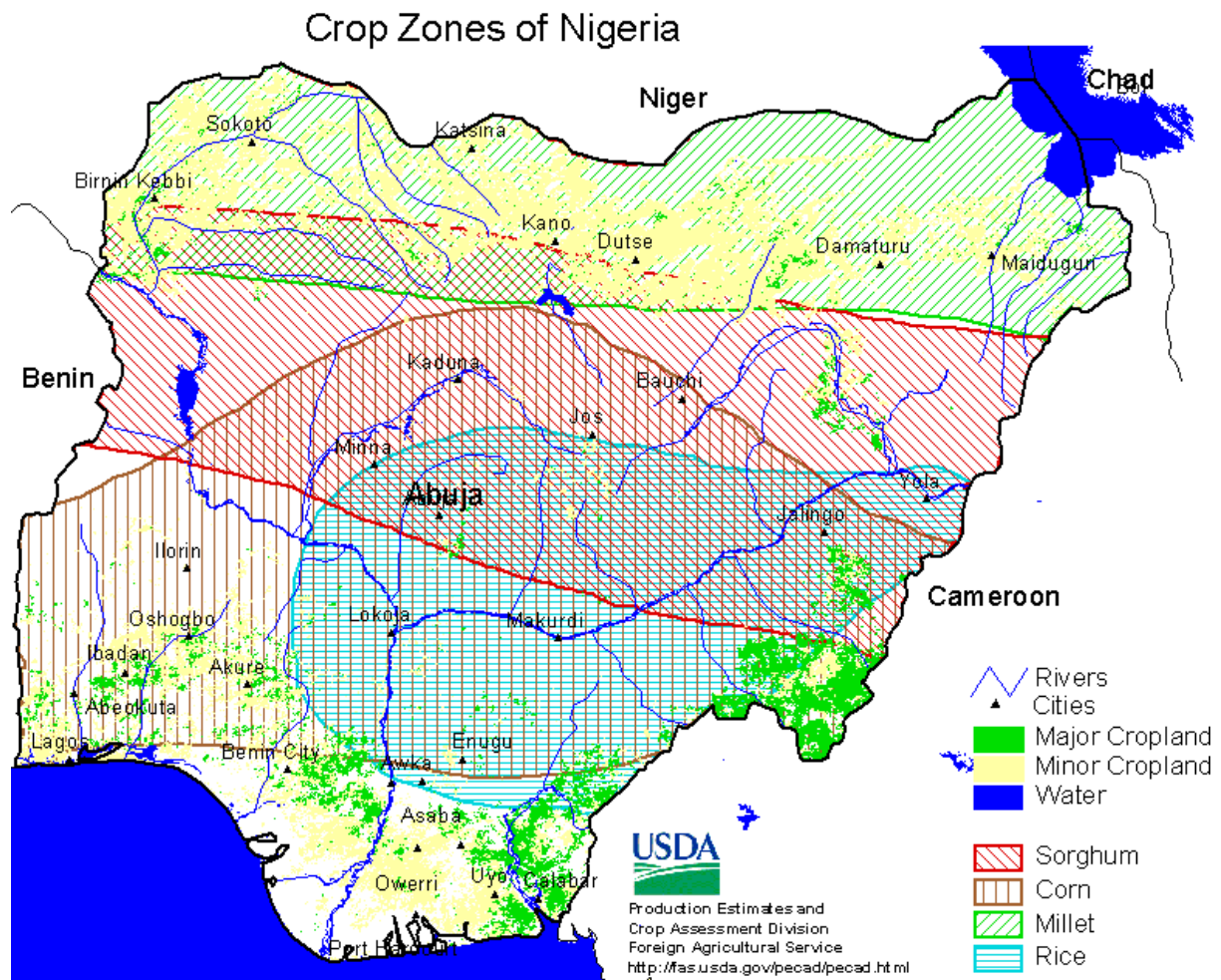
But in the Western region, the Yoruba people, who occupy the area engage mostly in the farm of Cash and root crops like Cocoa, as well as in Tomato, Pepper, Kola

nut( a nicotine rich Nut eaten raw, it is used also for sacrifice, and usually presented to people as a welcome gift), Cassava and also Orange Fruit<sup>17</sup>. So, in each ethnic region, there is a particular farm practice common or associated with that given ethnic group or Tribe. (See map 3.6, and map 3.7 below)



Map 3.7. Showing Agricultural activities in the three ethnic homelands (source: mapsof.net, 2007).

15-17. Ilaje N. P, (ed), (2007), *The New Geography of Nigeria*, Longman Nigeria PLC, Lagos, Pg 76-88.



Map 3.8: Crop zones in Nigeria as presented by USDA (source. [www.fas.usda.gov](http://www.fas.usda.gov))

There is no particular group of people that one can refer to as Nigerians. However, the various people living within the geographical area called Nigeria have different physical outlook. The moment one moves from one region of the country to another region, he will begin to encounter different people with different physical appearances.

In the Igbo region of Nigeria for instance, the People are stoic in outlook, average by height, with dark skinned, light skinned as well as brown skinned people. Also in the Western region of the country, the people are averagely Fat, especially the women. They are dark skinned, as well as light skinned. Then in the Northern region of the country, the people are naturally skinny and tall by height.

The Hausa people are naturally dark complexioned, whereas the Fulani people are naturally light skinned. However, the Fulani people can be further divided into two groups, one is of Pastoral Nomads, who wandered about with animals searching for

grasses for their animals to graze. There is also the Township Fulani, who engage in every aspect of normal daily human activity<sup>18</sup>.

By language, each and every ethnic group in Nigeria has a natural defined environment within which a particular language is spoken. No single Language is spoken in two different geographical regions in Nigeria. The Language barrier is a natural heritage that every individual carries along with him or her no matter where such an individual resides. The Language that one inherited from his biological Parents is one of the major traits that differentiate such an individual from another person, who hails from another ethnic homeland, even though the individual might reside side by side with people from other regions and with different ethnic background. Ethnic consciousness in Nigeria is not just a demographic thing; rather it is an internally inherited trait that passed from generation to generation. This means, that Hausa language is spoken within a particular geographical area in Nigeria, the Igbo Language is spoken as well within a geographical region in Nigeria, and the Yoruba Language is spoken also within a particular geographical enclave in Nigeria.

A Yoruba, an Igbo or a Hausa-Fulani person, who found himself or herself in another region, other than his or her paternal homeland carries along with him or with her the Language of his or her Parents. Even though such an individual might be fluent in the Language of the area he or she found himself or herself, but the inherited Language remains the only true identity of the very individual. Map 3.9 below displayed the territories where different languages are spoken and by which ethnic nationality.

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18. Iloeje N. P, (ed), (2007), *The New Geography of Nigeria*, Longman Nigeria PLC, Lagos, Pg 76-88.



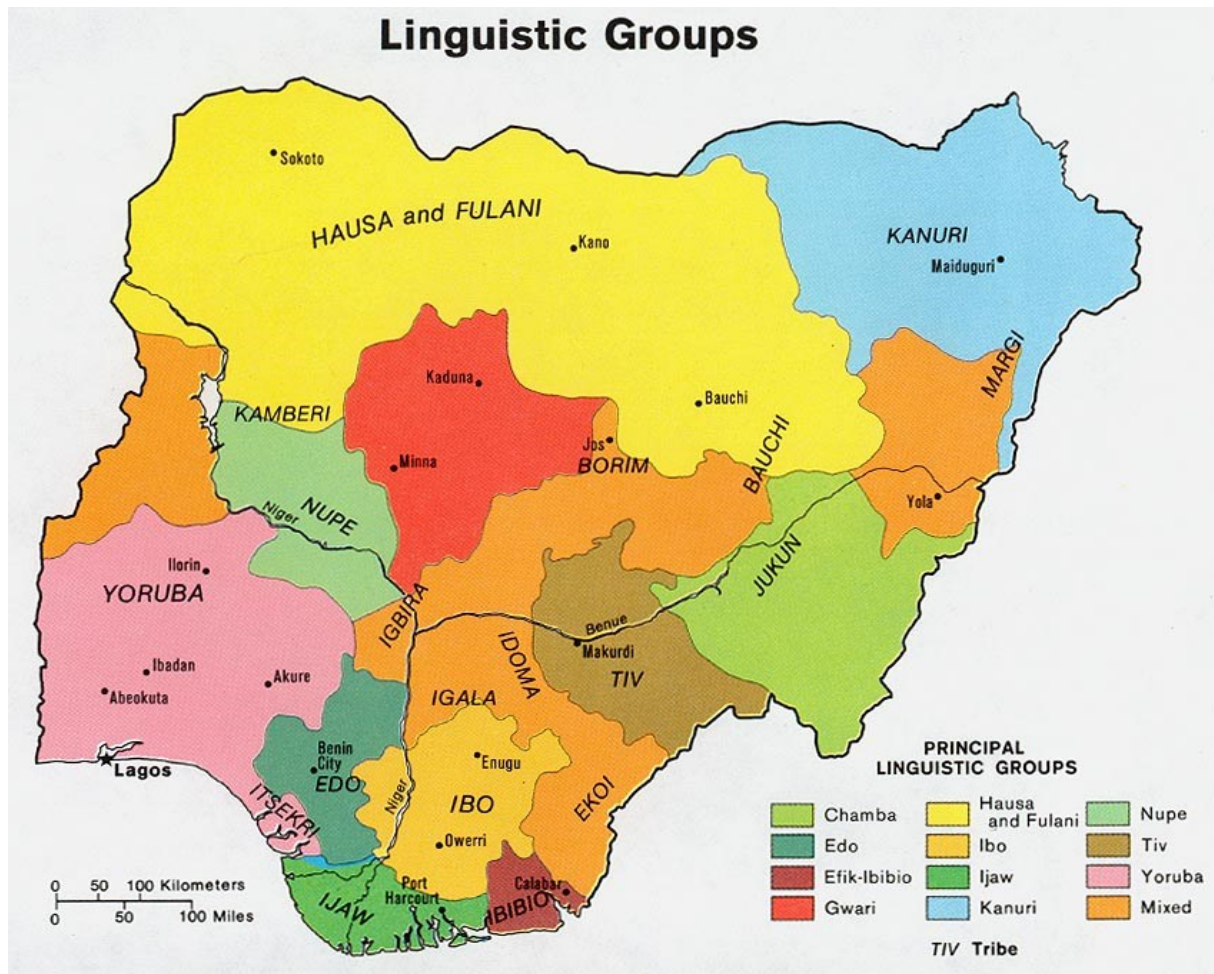


Figure 3.9 showing different linguistic groups in Nigeria ([www.lib.utexas.edu](http://www.lib.utexas.edu))

### 3.6. The Culture and Tradition of the Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba in Retrospect.

Like in every Nation, the traditional heritages found in Nigeria are highly diverse. Thus, they represent the ethnic composition of the People that dwell in the geographical entity called Nigeria. As one move from one corner of the country to another, so does one encounter different peoples and different traditions, and as different traditions emerge so different cultures and beliefs come into play. In every region and indeed in each ethnic homeland in Nigeria, there is a distinct tradition deeply rooted in the life and soul of the people within that region.

In view of this discussion which will be further expanded in a more detailed format in the course of this Thesis, it will be deduced that the landmass and the general geography of the areas contains significant part of the narrative that this Thesis tries to convey about the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani of

Nigeria. There is a correlation between the open savannah vegetation belt of northern Nigeria, through the absence of significant natural barriers and the extensive movement of human that it encouraged. The introduction of Islam in the northern region particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was made possibly through the open Savannah grassland. The introduction of Islam in the area north of the country, created a hierarchical society within the region. The society formed through the Islamic conquest became stratified and segregated. Thus, a wide gulf was created within Hausaland.

However, the vegetation belt inhabited by the Igbo and Yoruba contributed also immensely to differentiate the ethnic homelands from the savannah grassland in the north. There existed natural barriers that prevent movement and contact between the people. These barriers further helped to prevent the creation of opportunities for war of conquest between the nationalities.

The differences in the features traceable to the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani are not simple, and particularly with regard to segregated ancestral *homelands*. The differences recorded from the three nationalities covered areas of social and administrative patterns that each of the tribal groups practiced in their respective homelands before the British colonial conquest interrupted their histories. Nevertheless, the administrative pattern each of the three ethnic nationalities embarked upon in their quest for orderliness in their ancestral homeland distinguished their efforts from each other. And this is particularly so in the field of political development and social cohesion.

From the above enumerated historical facts, one can go ahead and claim that the three ethnic nationalities have developed a system of governance within their individual ancestral homelands, before the disruption of their homelands through the colonial conquest by the British Imperial Crown government and the consequent amalgamation of the different territories in 1914. The actions of the British Imperial government in the country, created an indelible scar in the history of Nigeria, and particularly with regard to their effects on the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. It changed tremendously not only the administrative pattern of the people, but it also created a complete new identity different from that



known to the individual tribal groups under study. The ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani have each established an independent sovereign entity separate from each other. Each has a defined system of administration, which includes legislative, as well as judicial organs and capabilities on how to dispense their functions. Out of the above mentioned historical development, this study will concentrate on the political mindset as exhibited by the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, particularly from 1999 - 2011.

### **3.6.1. The Igbo in the Eastern Region of Nigeria.**

The Igbo inhabit the east of the River Niger or south of the Middle Belt zone predominantly. Further down eastward, especially in the Cross River basin are also diverse groups amongst them the Ibibio. They are predominantly in the heart of the “Mainland” part of the present Akwa Ibom State, and Cross River State. The Anang people formed the main group in Ikot Ekpene, Abak and Ukanafun areas; while the Efik inhabited the Calabar. The Kwa (also Qua) group is found largely east of Calabar and towards the border with southern Cameroon. The Ekoi group is found in the upland and forested parts of the Cross River Basin (much of the eastern part of Akamkpa Division) and Yako people are found in parts of Obubra Local community. The upland parts of Cross River Basin and upper course of the cross River is occupied by many other groups of people, which include the Ago, Akaju, Ejagham, Ekuri, Mbembe, Ododop, Ukelle and Uyanga<sup>19</sup>. (See also Map 3.9, and map 3.10 below)

### **3.6.2. The Igbo ethnic nationality.**

The area south east of Nigeria is the ancestral homeland of the Igbo people. The area stretches from the Cross River in the southeast to the areas across the Niger River in the direction of southwest Nigeria (Isichei 1973). The homeland of the Igbo is located right in the thick rainforest belt of Nigeria. In comparison to the Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, the place of ancestral *homeland* tells much about the Igbo people.

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19. Okeke P.N (ed), (1977), *The Geography of Nigeria* (Enugu, African Press Foundation)



Map 3.10: showing the ancestral homeland of the Igbo ethnic nationality (source sitesatlas.com, 2008)



Map 3.10b: Sketch map showing the Igbo ancestral homeland (source. [www.igboguide.org](http://www.igboguide.org))

The Igbo constitute one of the three largest ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, which the British in 1914 merged with other ethnic nationalities into a single political entity (see map 3.9 above). However, the political undertones that often beclouds the issue of census count in the country does not allow for definite information about not just the Igbo, but also the population of the Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani. The leadership of the Igbo societies of pre-colonial Nigeria consists of two categories of people within the society. One can easily define this structure as leaders or super-actors, and the rest of members of the society or subordinate actors.

These two categories of people were involved in asymmetrical authority relations as members of the same social unit, between those who occupy leadership positions and the rest of members of society are basically the interaction of super-ordinate and subordinate actors in the dynamic process of directing the affairs of their societies. (Ejiogu 2004). Discussion and debates are done with the participation of every qualified adult male in the society. The leaders function during debates as moderators, who coordinate the different opinions of the members of the society. Within every Igbo pre-colonial society, decisions are collectively made, and enforced.

### **3.6.3.           *The structure of leadership in pre-colonial Igboland***

According to Ejiogu(2004), and other writers like Forde and Jones (1950), the Igbo in comparison with other existing ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, have an exclusive land area as their ancestral homeland, they speak common language, though with slight Dialectical differences and they share remarkable similarities in most of their socio-political institutions.

Writers like Ejiogu (2004) characterised the Igbo people into several cultural and social groupings. Ottenberg (1958: 295), Forde and Jones (1950) categorize the Igbo people also into five broad divisions: Northern or Onitsha Igbo, Southern or Owerri Igbo, Western Igbo, Eastern or Cross River Igbo, North-Eastern Igbo. Again the variations that constitute the basis of this broad categorisation have a lot to do with the response of the Igbo to the specific ecological situations in the part of the Igboland inhabited by each group (Ejiogu 2004). In every specific instance, as was pointed out by Jones in the case of the north eastern Igbo, the environmental nature of the area impacted heavily on the two mainstays of the Igbo economy, agriculture and trade. The vegetation condition of the area affected also the “nature of territorial expansion of the various communities within the homeland. It creates also in the people the spirit of solidarity in support of the traditional myths binding them as people, as well as defined the land tenure systems as practiced in the various communities within Igbo ancestral homeland. All these followed also the same characteristics associated to marriage, and kinship in relations to administrative institutions and their supporting features in Igboland” (Jones 1961: 118).

Although Ottenberg and others characterised the Igbo ethnic nationality as being of five different groupings, and like Ejiogu (2004) said, it is certainly not feasible to delve into the analysis of all the so divided groups. Put differently, it would have been good to scrutinise each of the groups, but the prevalent political system in each of the five groups cannot be so easily discussed. This is in view of time constraints and resources. The general pattern of political process which is shared by all Igbo groups is believed to provide enough information on how the Igbo organised their society in the pre-colonial period (Uchendu 1965: 39). The discussion includes a detailed and exhaustive analysis of issues that impact the administrative structure of the Igbo ethnic nationality. The Igbo, irrespective of ancestral occupied area in the homeland operate a decentralized structure of village-based democratic administration. Put differently, the system operated within the various sections, that is the Southern Igbo or in other words the Owerri Igbo, as well as the Northern Igbo, or in other words, the Igbo people who inhabit the northern part of the Igbo ancestral homeland is similar in structure and operation.

Nevertheless, the Igbo that inhabited the eastern part of the ancestral homeland or the Cross River Igbo have a matrilineal lineage system, whereas the rest of the Igbo groups all have a patrilineal lineage system. The matrilineal lineage system of the Eastern or Cross River Igbo rendered their marriage and kinship systems as well as their “rules of inheritance and succession” slightly different from what obtained among the rest of Igbo groups (Nsugbe 1974: vi). According to the historical account of Nsugbe (Nsugbe 1974: vi), “the nature of their men’s associations and cults” differs a little bit. However it is pertinent to delve also into the political process among the Northern and North-eastern Igbo. Particularly as it affect the monarchical political system that operated in the area. (See map 3.10. above for more information). The discussion is focused on

(i) the variations in culture that exist among the Igbo, and

(ii) using same to support the earlier position that variations as presented by some writers do not translate to mean that the Igbo are different peoples.

Nevertheless, of all the Igbo groups within the Eastern or Cross River Igbo main division, it is only the Aro Igbo who migrated in what must have been a village group to and settle permanently among the Igbo in Afikpo area within the homeland that can be classified as an exception. But they still maintained their patrilineal lineage system. (Ejiogu 2004)

#### **3.6.4.        *The structure of Authority in pre-colonial Igboland***

One can safely affirm that social-cultural, and political authority in indigenous Igbo society is configured into four distinct levels. The primary level of authority resided in the *Ezi* or compound, which is composed of households or *Onu-usekwu*. Superseding the *Ezi* is the *Umunna* or sub-lineage, which is in turn superseded by the *Ama* or Village. Following the *Ama* in that order is the *Ama-Ala* or Village Group where authority terminates. (Ejiogu 2004).

##### **(i)                                The Ezi and family bond.**

The *ezi* is best defined as the primary segmental unit most proximate to Administrative authority in Igbo society. It is the cradle of and reinforcement node for the socialization of every Igbo. The *ezi* is made up of a number of *onu-usekwu* which is “economically independent households each with a man or a woman as the head of the household” (Uchendu 1965: 40). This trait of economic independence renders the *onuusekwu* the basic segmental unit of economic sustenance for an individual Igbo in his society. Managerial authority in each household revolves around its head that is expected to hold his household together. The Head of the household is the source of most of the directives in his household. If his children are grown he often consults them on issues of vital importance in the household. He ensures that the women of the household, his wives and the wives of his sons, do not lack equitable access to the family plots of farmlands on which they raise subsistence staple food crops such as coco-yam, beans, cassava, maize, vegetables, and many other crops available within their community. These Crops are usually cultivated by the side to supplement the nutritional needs of their families.

The major economic role of the Head of the household centred on the cultivation of yams, the principal crop among the Igbo. Because yam cultivation is a labour-

intensive undertaking, the household is the primary source of labour for the head. When the sons of a head of a household come of age it is often the responsibility of the household head to start them off as yam cultivators, by providing them with their initial yam seeds. The individual functions more as a manager and always endeavours to be a good role model to his children and grandchildren. His personality determines the style of management that he adopts to ensure the success of his household as an economic unit.

*Okpara* is usually the appellation given to a first son of the head of a household, and such first male son takes precedence over the rest of his siblings regardless of the number of wives that their father has. His overall pre-eminent status corresponds to that of the *Ada* or first daughter in a family. Usually, unless the most senior wife in the household was childless or could not have children in time, the *Okpara* and the *Ada* share the same mother. While the *Ada* would marry and relocate to her husband's household, though without severing the ties in her household of birth. The *Okpara* assumes the position of his father at his death. He inherits his *obi* or reception hall, which is the premier edifice in the household in which the male head of a household lives and receives his visitors, the first male son inherits also the *Ofo* of his father. However the *Ofo* symbolises the legitimacy of the authority the first male son in a family wields as the head of household after the demise of the father. See (Ejiogu 2004).

**(ii) The Umunna structure and ancestral structure.**

The *Umunna* is the next level in the administrative structure in the pre-colonial indigenous Igbo society. Each *Umunna* is made up of a lineage of kinsmen, their wives and children who reside in their own portion of landmass within the village. Usually, members of an *Umunna* share the same descent from one male ancestor and his several wives. Each *Umunna* usually consists of several *ezi* or compounds. The *Umunna* is headed by the *Okpara-Umunna* who is usually the *Onye-nwe-ezi* from the most senior *ezi* in the *Umunna*. Since all the *ezi* that constitute an *Umunna* descended from one male ancestor, it is the *ezi* that was founded by the *Okpara* of the ancestor of the *Umunna* that assumes the leadership position in the *Umunna*. But if after several generations the seniority pattern in the *Umunna* can no longer be

effectively traced, premier authority in the *Umunna* will reside in the most senior male (Ejiogu: 2004). As it is the case in the *ezi*, the *Ofo Umunna*, or the symbol of legitimate authority, normatively acknowledged by the Igbo to exclusively emanate from the ancestors (Forde and Jones 1950) must be in the custody of the occupant of the office of *Okpara-Umunna*. According to Ejiogu (2004) and Uchendu (1965) the role of the *Ofo* in Igbo society is salient to every Igbo.

According to the account of Uchendu (1965), the occupant of the position of *Okpara-Umunna* wields the *Ofo* on behalf of members of his *Umunna*. It is also the symbol of both his authority as the head as well as his function as the priest who performs various rituals on their behalf. Then Isichei on the other hand explained that the *Okpara-Umunna* is very much revered by all. The individual holds both religious and social authority. He represents all the power and authority of their dead male ancestors. He offers sacrifices on behalf of the family, decides quarrels, allocate lands for farming of crops, and so on (see Isichei 1968: 127-8).

This position imbues very limited political authority and power on its occupants in pre-colonial indigenous Igbo society (Uchendu 1965). Although he presides over the *nzuko* or the assembly of his lineage, which is often summoned into session to resolve disputes that arise between members, the *Okpara-Umunna* does not formulate resolutions for the *Umunna*. His influence on resolutions is based on his opinions on questions of custom and tradition. His opinion is usually sought by the assembly before a decision is handed down on issues that involve the violation of custom or traditions that came before *Umunna* (Uchendu 1965). He is not expected to and does not interfere in the affairs of any of the compounds (*ezi*) that constitute the *Umunna*.

Whenever it was determined that a serious taboo in the land has been violated by a member of the *Umunna* the *Okpara-Umunna* is expected to ensure that the necessary sacrifices are offered to the ancestors and the deities to restore harmony in the *Umunna* and the community at large, and between the living and the ancestors from whom all authority emanate. Igbo lineage affiliation is traced through the *Umunna*. The *Umunna* provides a crucial platform for the objective deliberation and handling of issues before they reach the village assembly. It is highly unusual for an



individual who lacks the support of his *umunna* to attain a position of trust and responsibility in the village. Hence, in a figurative speech pattern, the Igbo liken the *umunna* to the thorny palm fruit bunch that can only be lifted off the ground by someone with the aid of a pad (See Ejiogu 2004, and Uchendu 1965).

To prevent the rise of a dynasty and the disruption of existing practice of authority in the *Umunna*, the son of the *Okpara-Umunna* does not succeed him. He is rather succeeded by his brother, if at his death; he is the one that happens to be the most senior male in the Compound (*ezi*). The prime position of the *ezi* that descended from the *Okpara* of the first ancestor or founder of any *Umunna* is ever lasting. In the event that it does not produce the most senior male in the *Umunna* at any one time, authority in the *Umunna* must pass on to the most senior male from another compound (*ezi*) in the *Umunna* without trumping the privileges of the prime compound (*ezi*). Age alone does not bequeath authority on anyone. Authority comes with age and character (Uchendu 1965).

Government at this level is based essentially on direct democracy (Afigbo 1973) which helps to confer the right of participation on every responsible adult member in the formulation of law in the *Umunna*. As it is at all levels of authority patterns in pre-colonial Igbo society, in his leadership capacity the *Okpara-Umunna* lacks the legitimacy to flout any of the four dimensions of influence relations on grounds of his authority position. If a holder of the office goes against the grains of the expectations of members of his lineage the preference was often to first call his attention to the fact through a dignified approach. Another elder or even someone close to him was often sent to bring his shortcomings to his attention. It was only in the event that he refuses to acknowledge those shortcomings that he loses the respect and loyalty of the *Umunna*. Committing such a taboo would definitely result in the negative perception of the legitimacy of the authority of an *Onye- nwe-ezi* by members of the *ezi*. Such loss of legitimacy and prestige is akin to indirect removal from authority.

### (iii) **The Ama structure.**

*Umunna* is a group of people who are usually blood related to each other and are product of or share the same ancestor. These kinds of people who share common ancestral heritage constitute an *Ama* or village, which is autonomous and 'sovereign'

in the conduct of its affairs (Uchendu 1965: 39). Administrative-wise, Afigbo (1973) likens the *Ama* to a village republic. Because of their shared common ancestry, marriage is highly forbidden between members of the same ancestral lineage. Politics at the village level is practiced in a direct democratic manner involving the participation of all adult males who convene as the *Ama-Ala* or body described as *Oha-na-Eze* in some areas, to attend the General Assembly in order to discuss the business of the village when summoned to do so (Uchendu 1965). The *Ama-Ala* convenes in the *Mbara* or the Village Square which is usually the village market place and ritual centre where the shrines of the Gods that the village jointly worships are located (Forde and Jones 1950, Ejiogu 2004). The Village administrative processes, practices, power and authority are normatively invested in the *Ama-Ala* (Afigbo 1973).

In the modern day administrative structure, the *Ama-Ala* can be compared to an *ad hoc* committee. However, in the real structure of administration in the Igbo Village, the oracles worshipped by a village, and the various existing age grades formed the village Administrative authority (Uchendu 1965). Despite having an *ad hoc* like structure, the *Ama-Ala* functions still as one of the main 'channels' through which members of the village take part in the administration of the Village.

The *Ama-Ala* is a medium through which people engage in the governance of their Villages. The medium is open without any artificial hindrance to all adult members of the village. Because villagers engage themselves as individuals as well as on the auspices of their respective *Umunna* whenever the *Ama-Ala* convenes, the members of each *Umunna* gather themselves in their village Square (*Mbara*). That way, they consult among themselves in the course of debates. The village leadership is also composed of those who hold the *Ofo*. In most cases, they are the elders who are also the heads of their respective lineage, men and women of wealth and prestige who have taken titles and have made names in the village and have developed their power and influence gradually (Uchendu 1965: 41).

Individuals who feature prominently at this level of authority in the village are often those who acquired titles of *Nze*, *Ozo*, *Ezeji*, etc. by virtue of which they become members of title holders societies or associations. They must have sufficiently distinguished themselves to become members of the *Okonko*, and other secret

societies (Jones 1962, and Ejiogu 2004). People acquire traditional titles and membership of the titles associations through their wealth. It is through membership of the title associations that an individual “acquired a special status as *ogaranya* (as opposed to plain *ogbenye*) and was entitled to enjoy more weight and authority in the councils of his people than if he were a poor man (*ogbenye*)” (Afigbo 1973: 15, and Ejiogu 2004).

#### **(iv). The village republic**

A group of villages that usually share some measure of affinity but intermarry compose a democratic government of the Village-Group in which each one irrespective of size is equal. The Village-Group setting is the biggest political unit in Igbo political system (Afigbo 1973:17). The villages that comprise a Village-Group are ranked according to the seniority of their founders who are the children of one ancestor. “The most senior in rank is believed to have grown out of the descendants of the first son of the founder while the most junior is said to have descended from his last son” (Afigbo 1973: 17). The *Ama- Ala* is also charged with the Government of the village-group. But unlike the *Ama-Ala* at the village level, this one functions as a representative Assembly. Every Village is represented in the *Ama-Ala* by its *Ofo* Custodians (*Ndi Isi Ofo*).

However, supreme authority still lies in the *Ama-Ala*. Any resolution or pronouncement made by the *Ama-Ala* is “enforced within each Village by the age-grades and secret societies of each village” (Afigbo 1973: 20). Age grades are vital components of the administrative structure in the Village-Group. Due to the absence of modern time professional law enforcement organisations, it is the age grades that are assigned the responsibility of enforcing compliance of the resolutions made by the *Ama-Ala*. But, the responsibility to enforce any agreed resolution does not go beyond village boundaries. However each member of the Village-Group guarded her independence quite jealously. Any member village, which feels that its interests are not sufficiently protected in any decision taken by the *Ama-Ala*, can opt to ignore its enforcement. It is in situations like that, that the restorative role of the oracles is brought in to take pre-emptive measures to avert crisis that could degenerate to high intensity warfare if they are allowed to remain unaddressed (Isichei 1973, and Ejiogu

2004). Verdicts handed down by oracle are binding on all parties. The verdicts that emanate from the oracles hardly vary from popular expectations in the community for the reason that their agents always go out of their way to clandestinely gather all existing information on the dispute from the disputing communities as well as their neighbours (Meek 1937, and Ejiogu 2004).

In Igbo Village structure, the administrative organs that governed the various Villages, like the age organization “is a universal broad division of the male and of the female population into three categories or grades of Elders, Men, Women, Boys and Girls” (Jones 1962: 194). The variation and complexity attached to this structure of authority vary from one political unit and community to another. The Elders are usually the ones who are in-charge of leadership in the unit. The Elders or *Ndichie* do not exercise their leadership authority in Igbo society in isolation of their Ancestors. The Elders are the acknowledged link between the living members of their community and the Ancestors, who are still considered to be part of the community. Their link with the Ancestors is a source of legitimacy for their leadership and authority in the Community (Ejiogu 2004)

Participation in the affairs of every Igbo Village is a normative right of “all who were old enough to talk sense” (Afigbo 1973: 20). Apart from the asymmetry relation evident in the administrative pattern, status within the Village setup functions according to the belief that all members of the Village “who are worthy, are basically equal, and differences in wealth notwithstanding” (Afigbo 1973: 21).

Direct democracy is one of the critical elements in the administrative structure and practice amongst the Igbo. Apart from encouraging the participation of all and sundry in the direction of the affairs of the community, direct democracy equally makes it possible for the community to ensure that individuals who are entrusted with authority positions are responsive in the discharge of their duties. Direct participation makes it possible for villagers to vote down any unpopular decision taken on their behalf by their representatives in the *Ama-Ala* at the village-group (Ejiogu 2004).

Religion, which is the anchor on which all the four dimensions of influence relations are hinged is also a vital legitimating agent for authority in Igbo society. Indigenous

Igbo religion provides the glue that binds most if not all the components of life in Igbo society in a manner that checks and punishes any attempt by anyone who abuses or ignores any constituted authority (Ejiogu 2004). It is equally the anchor for the Igbo personality through which society regenerates itself. The results are that those who are entrusted with the authority to play a prominent role in the leadership of the society are normatively discouraged from following the path that is unpopular within the society.

There is no known physical difference between the people living within this region of the country. The only noticeable difference is in the language spoken. This is so because, when an individual moves from the central part of the region down southward, then one will encounter other ethnic languages, though not comparable with that spoken in the central part of the region. There is the Efik and the Ibibio, but their presence is not well felt due to the small size of the speakers. So the effect of these small language groups remains negligible. The people of this region in Nigeria are Christians, though with some negligible number of animists. Christianity is the identified religion of the people inhabiting this region.

The family structure in this region is that of a man, his wife, his children and his grand children. As tradition permits, the male child is not to move out of the family compound, even if such an individual has attained the level of having his own family. He is expected to remain within the family home. There are always parcels of empty lands within the family compounds where such an individual could erect his own Building, if he has the money to build his own house. It is always the pride of the family, if their son becomes rich enough as to have the resources to build a house.

A female child is by tradition expected to remain within the family home until she is married to a man. Most girls lived under the tutelage of their mother. A woman is expected to teach her female child almost everything about man and woman. The female child is expected to learn how to cook different kinds of the tribal delicacy. This is done in anticipation of such a girl getting married and the need for her to manage her home. The Igbo people are good social mixers. They have no boundary in term of social relationship, especially the male folk. But unlike the male folk, the girls do not mix so freely and easily with people who are not of Igbo extraction. One

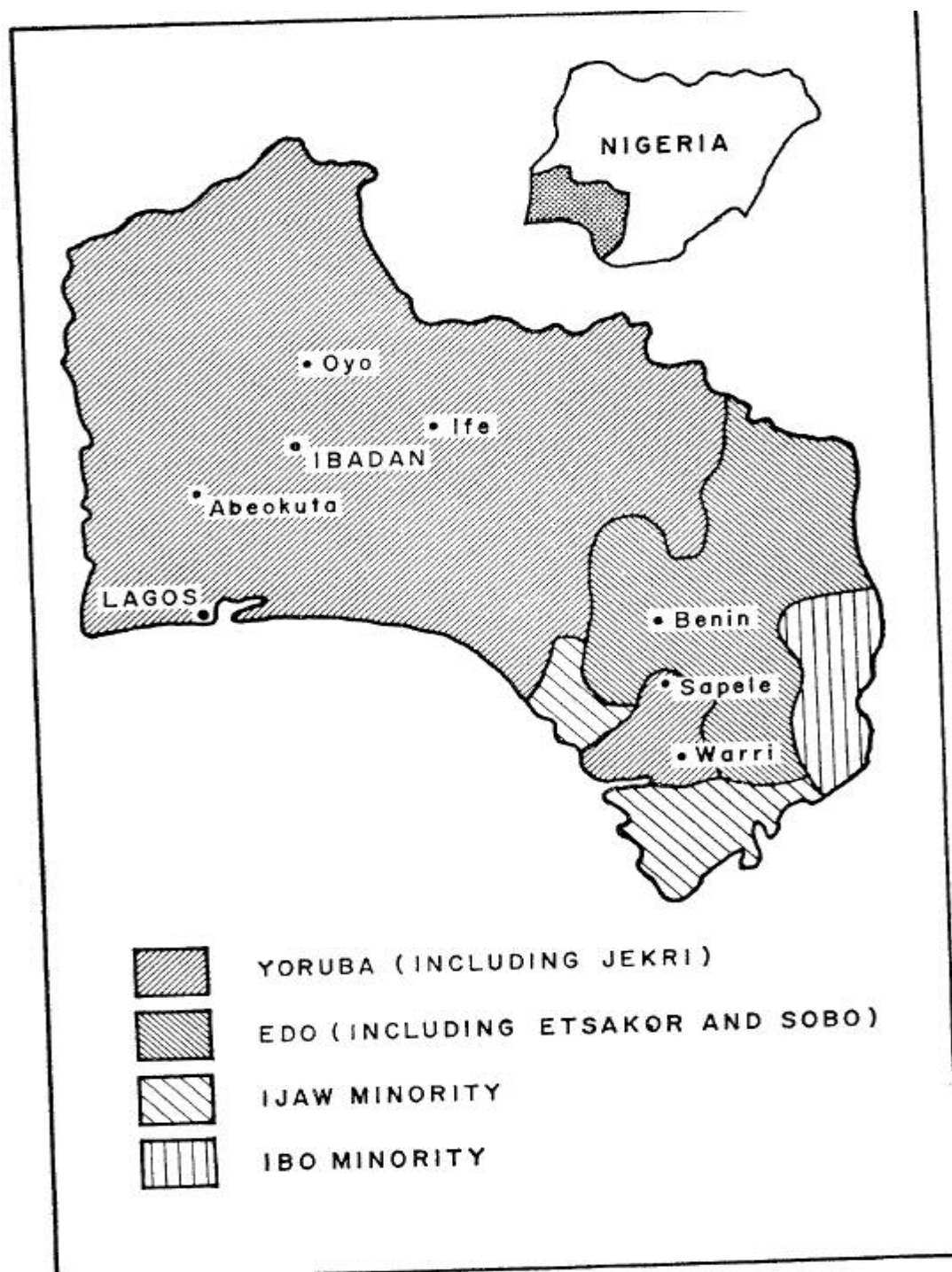
other aspect contributing to this lifestyle is the belief that Igbo men are too attached to their families and are touted to be the best husbands in the world. Marriage in Igboland is not just an affair between a man and a woman; rather it is assumed to be between a family and another family. It is most common for a girl from another ethnic group to marry an Igbo man, than for a girl of Igbo extraction to marry outside the ethnic group. The marriage principle among the people of Igbo extraction is conventionally based on “One man! One wife”. Divorce is alien in the marriage dictionary of the Igbo. No matter the nature of the crisis between married Couples, it is always expected that the couple with their both families will sort out their differences amicably.

The Igbo people are good traders and business oriented. They make Money out of every opportunity and with every means possible. They are itinerant, always on the move. They are found in almost every Town around the World. In every Town outside the Eastern region in Nigeria, the Igbo people always form the second largest ethnic group apart from the natives of such Town. Education is a fundamental right of every child in this region. The Igbo people are highly educated in the academic. They are equally involved in every aspect of human endeavour.

### **3.7. The Yoruba in the Western Region of Nigeria.**

The Yoruba inhabit the deciduous rain forest vegetation belt of the western region of Nigeria. There are several groups that include the Yoruba of Oyo Kingdom, Ile Ife, the Ijebu, the Egba, the Ekiti, the Awori, etc. According to the historical account of Forde, the Yoruba *homeland* occupies an area that stretches more than 200 miles and this covers areas as far as present day Benin Republic and Togo, and also northwards towards Nupeland (Forde 1951). The fact that the nationality of Yoruba-speaking people consists of several groups gave Forde cause to claim that the Yoruba are more “united by language than by culture” (Forde 1951: 1). Biobaku (1955) argued that the Yoruba, irrespective of location share some traditional and cultural traits as well as the same history of origin traceable to the Kingdom of Ile-Ife. There is also the summation that the Yoruba share the same mythical ancestor in Oduduwa (Oguntomisin 1981: 223, Ejiogu, 2004). However, according to the accounts of able Yoruba scholars like Atanda, and Oguntomisin, each of the Yoruba groups in Oyo, Ife, Ijebu, Egba, Ekiti, and Awori, founded her own Kingdom or sphere

of influence despite the claim of common descent from Oduduwa<sup>20</sup>. Although, not without slight differences from each other in some ways (Atanda 1973, Oguntomisin 1981). (See map 3.11 below)



Map. 3.11. Showing the Yorubaland and other minorities in the area. Source: adapted from Coleman (1958:26,) and Ejiogu (2004).

However, scholars like Coleman took a different position on the issue of political differences in pre-colonial Yorubaland. Coleman asserted that for a significant part of the 18th century, it was only the Yoruba of Ijebu stock that was not ruled from Old Oyo, (Coleman 1958: 25). In the opinion of Ejiogu (2004), Coleman's argument was a historical fact that can be supported by Yoruba history itself. There are other scholars too, who pointed out that "the Yoruba people never effectively come under a single political authority" (Oguntomisin 1981: 223) (Forde 1951, Law 1973). But according to Smith, the Old Oyo Empire, through which several Yoruba groups were joined as a single political umbrella began at around the middle of the 18th century to decline and subsequently collapse around the year 1826 (Smith 1969a).

But, Oguntomisin argued further that despite the differences in the administrative establishments of the different Yoruba Kingdoms, the similarities that existed in their political structures are more than the differences (Oguntomisin 1981: 223). Lloyd asserted also that where differences exist between their administrative organs, such differences usually tend to be minor (Lloyd 1954). Oguntomisin further explained that access to the office of the Paramount chief in each of the Yoruba Kingdoms is by ascription, and that administrative authority is also statutory prescribed and under the leadership of a non military or Warrior person.(Oguntomisin,1981). Nevertheless, there are also elements of check and balances aimed at preventing whoever that is on the throne of leadership from becoming a despot or having the power to plunge any of the Kingdoms into autocracy (Oguntomisin 1981).

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20. *Oduduwa is the ancestral Father of the Yoruba Nation. He was a legend, who led the Yoruba from the old Sudan to their present homeland in Nigeria.*



Another area of similarity between the Yoruba Kingdoms is in their general belief of having a common descent in Oduduwa, and the spiritual enclave of Ile Ife. It is an age-long tradition for every occupant of notable positions of authority in Yorubaland to have a link or connection to the Oduduwa. However, the claim often made by every Yoruba to having a common descent is equally an identity issue, which puts them apart from the other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria (Gbadamosi 1978).

State building in pre-colonial Yorubaland resulted to establishment of large towns and Kingdoms that operate with concentrated or structured authority. How then can someone attribute the incidence and feature of large towns and concentrated power structure in the pre-colonial Yorubaland? However, the answer to the question lies in the history that makes the Yoruba, which shows that unlike the Igbo, they used warfare as an instrument of state building (Ajayi and Smith 1971). However, these two features, that is, large political structure and centralised authority in the process of governance did not in any way translate to autocracy in the governance structure in pre-colonial Yoruba societies.

If one probes deeply into the pre-colonial history of the Yoruba, there is a proof to show there was no dearth of ambitious men, who tried, though unsuccessful in their bid to transform themselves into autocrats. However, as often is the case, the individuals who tried imposing their wills on the society, were always from the military. Though, they turned themselves into autocrats and despots, but they could still not impose stable control mechanism over their various created societies, and this led to the non realisation of their endeavour. (Atanda 1973: 10, Oguntomisin 1981: 231-2).

Judging from what has already been said earlier in the discourse with regard to the geography of the part of Nigeria, where the Yoruba *homeland* is located, to argue that geography might have been a facilitating factor that hindered those individuals in pre-colonial Yoruba history, who tried to transform themselves into autocrats from succeeding in their quest. But it was discovered through the presentation of many scholars in Yoruba history that rather than be ruled by autocrats and despots, the Yoruba people often fled into the forest and hills to establish new towns. Some of the towns established by the Yoruba people in such manner are Ibadan and Abeokuta (Ajayi 1965), (Falola 1985), (Oguntomisin 1981).

According to Ajayi and Smith, most of the towns in southern Yorubaland, were consciously sighted within a belt of forest (the *Igbo Ile*). The areas were deliberately left to retain its undergrowth and was connected only by narrow paths that leads to the city gates” (Ajayi and Smith 1971: 23). The entrenched administrative system of the Yoruba, organised through monarchy was based on stable statutory provisions which spelt out the modalities for power sharing, and checks and balances. The measure was employed to deter the leaders from achieving their ambition of imposing autocratic rule in pre-colonial Yoruba towns and Kingdoms.

**(i) *The role of Religion and Authority in Yorubaland.***

Like it is amongst the Igbo, indigenous religion which is deeply rooted in the social structure and social organization of the Yoruba played a central role in all aspects of their pre-colonial political organization. Much of the reason for this can be located in the fact that Yoruba religion is totally home-grown (Ejiogu 2004)

In relation to the type of governance operated by the Yoruba in the pre-colonial period, the traditional Yoruba religion, which contained some level of power concentration in the centre, is neither rigid nor exclusive in its principles and application. Individuals in positions of authority at different levels of the society, and also priests made up the centres of action through which the people within the society take part in their religious and social affairs (Lawson 1985: 54-6).

The encapsulation of the aforementioned aspects of the flexible worldview of the Yoruba has enabled indigenous Yoruba religion to continue to function as one of the crucial agencies of socialization amongst the Yoruba. Traditional religion of the Yoruba enabled them to adapt to situations, and create the ability to imbibe “secular modes of thought and action that proposed new concepts of power and relationship in creative ways, while retaining the originality of their authority structures. (Lawson 1985: 98, Ejiogu 2004) Its creative response to Christianity gave birth to the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, a popular Christian denomination among the Yoruba, which parallels their indigenous religion in both creed and practice (Ejiogu 2004).

The paramount ruler (Oba or Kabiyesi) in any pre-colonial Yoruba town or Kingdom can only perform ritual offerings through the recommendation of the Chief priests of such Kingdom. However, the paramount ruler has no control over the Chief Priest of his Kingdom. The Chief priests on the other hand have the authority from both the gods and Ancestors to compel any paramount chief of any Kingdom to remain responsive to the subjects in his domain, especially in the discharge of responsibilities his position demands.

According to Ejiogu (2004), in some Yoruba societies, the King's (*Oba, Kabiyesi*) oracle is housed in the abode of the Chief priest. This was meant to ensure the independence of the priest in the discharge of his official religious functions. That way, only the Chief Priest has the privilege to consult the King's (*Oba, or Kabiyesi*) oracle when asked and he is mandated as a tradition to relay his findings to the latter. It was a traditional taboo for any King (*Oba, or Kabiyesi*) to initiate the offering of sacrifices to his ancestors by himself.

Anytime, it dawns on a Chief priest that the ancestors were not at peace with the conduct of the King (*Oba, Kabiyesi*), he will as custom demands call for atonement through offering of sacrifices to appease them (Cole 1975). Sometimes priests were prevailed upon by the disenchanted subjects in a Kingdom or town to prescribe taboos that a King (*Oba, Kabiyesi*) was bound to obey (Atanda 1973: 4). According to Atanda (1973), Ejiogu (2004), in Yoruba tradition, to be touched by a masquerade implied that the ancestors had vetoed a King's (*Oba*) legitimate authority to lead his subjects. In fact, it was on behalf of subordinate members of the Yoruba society that priests established the tradition; that it is a taboo for a King (*Oba*) to be touched by a masquerade.

According to the historical account of Atanda, there were instances when a King (*Oba*) who became autocratic and despotic was made to abdicate the throne upon being touched by a masquerade. But then, the action was instigated by the people (Atanda 1973). With fear of possible revolt, and the follow-up unpalatable events that bound to follow such traditional religious actions of the people, the Kings in the pre-colonial Yoruba towns and cities, avoided responsiveness in their practice of authority at the risk of inciting the people against their authority.

***(ii) The use of Warfare and Conquest as a State Building mechanism in the pre-colonial Yorubaland.***

According to several scholars of Yoruba history, there are periods in time, when the power and influence of the monarchy in the Yorubaland was severely eroded (Ajayi 1965, Awe 1973). The reason for that partly derived from warfare and conquest at the time when they became effective devices for state building and transformation of pre-colonial Yorubaland (Ajayi and Smith 1971). In a space of time that covered about 80 years (1813-1893) Yorubaland witnessed over 50 different wars (Johnson 1921, Smith 1969, Ajayi and Smith 1971). Atanda (1973), Oguntomisin (1981), Falola (1985) have established that there were changes in the leadership style of the Yoruba. The changes were perfectly attributed to the wars and revolts which resulted in the decline and eventual collapse of the Old Oyo Empire. One such change was the rise of militarism and despotism in the conduct of the business of governance particularly in some new states that were founded in parts of post-Old Oyo Yorubaland (Ajayi 1965: 72-81, Awe 1973, Ejiogu 2004). However, Ibadan is one of the new states that were founded in southern Yorubaland by the influx of population of displaced groups from the Old Oyo Empire and the surrounding states (Ajayi and Smith 1971: 11, Ejiogu 2004). The town of Ibadan was founded in 1829, and it grew in all respects as a result of the dependence of its leaders on their military capability. This was used for the sustenance of their various Kingdoms, towns and cities, and also for the transformation of their society. (Ajayi and Smith 1971), Awe (1973), Ejiogu (2004).

Traditionally, the norm in Yorubaland was to mobilize for war and demobilize the army and let the soldiers and their commanders return to their farms immediately after (Johnson 1921: 75, 131, Ajayi and Smith 1964: 10). But Ibadan broke with that tradition by raising a standing military composed of professional soldiers who assumed extensive leadership roles in society. With the exception of two religious positions of authority, recruitment into all other positions in Ibadan was affected by the new norm, which made merit "the most important qualification for achieving chieftaincy titles" (Awe 1973: 66), Ejiogu (2004). The city of Ibadan was to become a Yoruba polity that extended a lot of recognition to soldiers and war commanders in the bid to retain their services (Awe 1973: 66), Falola (1985), Ejiogu (2004).

According to Ejiogu, some state formation and most state transformation undertakings in pre-colonial Yorubaland were conquest-based, and that is what differentiates the Igbo from the Yoruba. This evident disparity in state building and transformation between the two ethnic nationalities did not stem from a history of war prone society, either in Igboland or between the Igbo and their neighbours. (Ejiogu 2004).

### ***(iii) The administrative structure in Yorubaland in the pre-colonial era in Nigeria.***

As mentioned before, the Yoruba ethnic nationality settled in the south-western part of Nigeria, and organised their society in kingship groups or lineages. It was those groups that then evolved into kingdoms in each case (Atanda 1973). Thus, while the Egba founded the Egba Kingdom (Abeokuta) with the Alake of Egba as the paramount ruler, the Oyo Town was also founded with the Alafin of Oyo as the paramount ruler, and likewise Ile Ife, with the Ooni of Ife as the paramount ruler of the town, and then the Ijebu founded the kingdom of Ijebu Ode, with the Awujale of Ijebu as the paramount ruler of the founded town, and many more.

As was earlier established, lots of socio-political development and transformation took place in most of the pre-colonial Towns in Yorubaland before and especially during the period beginning from early part of the 2nd decade in the 19th century. According to Atanda (1973), as well as Akintoye (1971), most of the political domination wielded by the established towns was derived from conquest. This ultimately meandered its way through extension of political authority by towns into other surrounding neighbouring towns.

However, power and authority in the centralized political system of the Yoruba evolved through a particular structural configuration, which is evident in Figure 1 in chapter 1. Every individual Yoruba belonged to a family lineage (*Ebi*). The male members of a lineage, as well as their wives, and children, but that is, if the Children are married, make up a lineage. Each family lived together in one compound (*agbo-ile*)” (Akintoye 1971: 13). The lowest level in the leadership structure of the Yoruba political order is the family lineage (*ebi*). However, a combined groups of many lineages makeup a ward (*adugbo*). A ward is the next level in the organisational

structure of the Yoruba political system. The Town (*Ilú*) was classified as the highest level in the leadership structure in Yorubaland. Ordinarily the Yoruba society is structured through the joining of several lineages. (Ejiogu 2004).

***(iv) The Clustered Settlement Pattern of the Yoruba in pre-colonial Nigeria (the Ilú)***

The Yoruba are town-dwellers, who carved the town (*Ilú*) out as the apex of their centralised and monarchical political system (Atanda 1973: 3). The settlement and the inhabitant of each *Ilú* (town) were structured according to several lineages that are held together by strong kinship ties (Atanda 1973: 3). Administrative influence in an *Ilú* is neither established nor maintained in a haphazard pattern. According to F. I. Fadipe, “the relationships between the capital town of the state and other towns and villages embraced under it, whether offshoots of the original town or tributary, were closely similar from state to state, so also was the division of the personnel of the state into civil and military ranks (Fadipe 1970).

The functions of the state council were practically the same from one state to another. The procedure adopted in the conduct of affairs within any given town or Kingdom in the pre-colonial Yorubaland, whether in the judicial sphere or in the military or in the sphere of external relations was likewise, the same from state to state (Fadipe 1970: 200), Ejiogu (2004), and from one group to the other. Most if not all Yoruba states were made up of an original town which serves as the capital, other towns which were either founded by people from the original town or conquered and annexed as tribute-paying towns (Fadipe 1970), and Ejiogu (2004). In the Old Oyo Empire the title of the paramount ruler is *Aláàfin*. In Ijebu Ode, and Ife, he is called the *Awujale* and the *Ooni* respectively. In the Ekiti Confederation, he is called the *Oba*. (Ejiogu 2004). It is worthy to note that power and authority evolved through an elaborate state bureaucracy in the pre-colonial political structure of the Yoruba.

The first lineage that settled in a town (*Ilú*) is usually the one that produced the paramount ruler. The administrative structure of subsidiary polities in each of the central Yoruba states was similar to the one that existed in the latter. According to Ejiogu, different public officials were designated to conduct civil and military affairs in

the main Yoruba towns, as well as in their subsidiary towns and settlements. According to the historical account of the Yoruba by Fadipe, and Ejiogu, a subsidiary town in the pre-colonial Yorubaland has no power of her own in the conduct of external relations, the implementation of capital punishment and the recruitment of the towns' ruler. Though each subsidiary town within the pre-colonial Yorubaland, this include the conquered towns, and all those tribute paying polities, enjoyed autonomy in the conduct of her political affairs. The authority of the central states over their subsidiary polities was exercised mostly in raising manpower for military campaigns and revenue collection (Fadipe 1970: 201, Ejiogu 2004).

All over Yorubaland the status of the paramount ruler is similar in each kingdom or town and the paraphernalia and rituals of kingship follow a common pattern. Although, the appointment or the choice of a paramount ruler, is mostly guided by the norm of hereditary as sanctioned by tradition. But there are also situations when tradition was bypassed in the nomination and the subsequent installation of a new King in a Yoruba town. However the mythical links to the royal lineage at Ile-Ife or victory in a power situation in a town (*Ilu*) were used to bring someone into the office (Atanda 1973).

Like Ejiogu enumerated, the *Oba*, *Aláàfin*, *Ooni*, *Awujale* as the case may be, is the *de facto* leader or premier leader who directs the governments in every given town within the central Yoruba kingdom polities. The legitimacy of the authority reposed in the office of the chiefs of state in pre-colonial Yorubaland derived from the intricate relationship that exists between religion, the social structure, and social organization of the Yoruba. (Ejiogu 2004). According to Fadipe, the unwritten constitution of the pre-colonial Yoruba Kingdoms designed the King (Kabiyesi) as the companion of the gods which the people of the towns or Kingdoms worshipped (Atanda 1973). He is popularly called "*Oba aláse èkejì òrìsà*, the king, the commander and wielder of authority next to the supernatural object of worship" (Fadipe 1970: 205). Akintoye maintained also that the King was supposed to have power of life and death over his people (Akintoye 1971: 16).

However, the 'absolutism' implied above does not translate to either reality or practice. This is particularly because, among the Yoruba, there are clear limitations

on the power, which is associated with each level and position in the administrative structure. Such generally accepted constitutional as well as traditional restriction made it impossible for the *Oba*, *Aláàfin*, *Ooni*, or *Awujale* to exercise any traditionally unsanctioned power. (Ejiogu 2004) According to Akintoye, “the *Oba* exercised little direct authority of his own. The chief’s (Oloye’s), the councils, and further down the ladder of the lineages and associations stood as the main instruments of authority within the pre-colonial Yorubaland” (Akintoye 1971: 17). Two questions on the authority of the *Oba*, *Aláàfin*, *Ooni*, and *Awujale* need to be posed and resolved at this point. First, over what matters is the authority of the *Oba*, *Aláàfin*, *Ooni*, and *Awujale* exercised? Second, what are the bases of the legitimacy of their authority, that is, what justifies it?

As occupants of sacrosanct positions that symbolised the unity of the component lineages in the entire Yoruba society, the authority of these Paramount rulers is exercised over matters and issues that relate to the safety and over all well-being of the people on the one hand (Fadipe 1970). On the other hand, they exercised their authority over foreign affairs particularly the conduct of wars and issues that concern peace with other neighbouring towns and Kingdoms, both hostile and friendly ones, and the “administration of justice” (Fadipe 1970: 206).

In each respective case they exercised authority over these areas as heads of the state council or the *Igbimo*. The *Igbimo* is composed of representatives from designated lineages as well as interest groups and professional associations in the towns that constitute each polity, be it the kingdom or its subsidiaries (Fadipe 1970, Ejiogu 2004, Law 1971). The *Igbimo* discharged legislative, judicial and executive functions “with the king either immediately at the head or in the background” (Fadipe 1970: 209, Ejiogu 2004). In the Old Oyo Empire the *Igbimo* was called the “*Oyo ti o mo esi*, shortened as *Oyo-Mesi*, that is, “the Oyo who knows the appropriate answer to issues” (Atanda 1970: 228, Ejiogu 2004). Among the Ijesha Yoruba the *Igbimo* is called the *Iwarefa*, the Ijebu Yoruba calls it the *Ilamuren* (Atanda 1973, Ejiogu 2004), and it is called the *Ogboni* in some other parts of Yorubaland.



It was through the discharge of their legislative functions that the chiefs of state and the *Igbimo* exercised their authority to issue directives in the kingdoms. Those directives were mainly “*ad hoc* orders, such as imposing prohibition on commercial relation between members of the town or Kingdom and those other communities, or the issue of regulations which nominally was under the purview of the customary laws, such as a reaffirmation, at a time of unusual activity on the part of burglars, of what penalties awaited those caught, and the fixing of time within which anyone might venture to go out at night” (Fadipe 1970: 208). The participation of the indigenes in this process was through members of their lineage who served in the *Igbimo*, and was therefore indirect. Whenever these *ad hoc* orders were handed out, they were often disseminated to the rest of the town or Settlement through the palace town crier. But compliance to them was a firm responsibility of the lineages. The positive and negative sanctions that anchored political authority in Yoruba society were exacted through the lineages (Ejiogu 2004, Schwab 1955).

The power and influence of the King and the *Igbimo* include also the performance of Judicial functions. Their authority in the area of justice straddled the dimension of order and the extraction of compliance to judgements that they handed down in serious or capital cases. Through such capacity they constituted the highest Court in the town or Kingdom with the sole responsibility and power to try capital cases and other indictable offences such as murder, treason, burglary, arson, unlawful wounding, manslaughter, as well as in the case of incest or disputes between occupants of positions of authority and also appeals that emanated from lower judicial bodies in the constituent towns (Fadipe 1970: 209, Ejiogu 2004).

The authority to grant pardons of all types belonged entirely to the paramount ruler in any Yoruba pre-colonial town. A King and members of the *Igbimo* handled regular cases in regular sessions of the *Igbimo* during the course of the week, while special sessions were convened when the occasion called for them (Fadipe 1970, Ejiogu 2004). The facts that executions and jail terms were carried out in the capital by designated institutions of the Kingdom indicated the presence of some measure of regulated regimentation in the Yoruba administrative system (Fadipe 1970, Akintoye 1971, Ejiogu 2004).

From the ongoing so far, it can be deduced through the centralized features as posited by several scholar of Yoruba, that the political system operational in Yorubaland during the pre-colonial era granted the Kings the authority and power to be quite direct in their functions. However, it is quite evident that their influence depended on the participation of members of the *Igbimo*, which is composed of lineage and the representatives of other interest groups. The *Igbimo* was so powerful that it once compelled an autocratic King in one of the towns in Yorubaland to commit suicide in pre-colonial era. Although the *Igbimo* constitute an influential and extensive leadership structure together with the King, but its members stood as the true representatives of the people. Their relevance derived from their authority to participate on behalf of the lineages and groups that they represented and to ensure that the King or paramount ruler remained responsive to the needs of the people within his domain or areas of influence. (Ejiogu 2004)

However, despite the non direct participation of the ordinary people within the Yoruba communities in the pre-colonial era, there are still some clear democratic elements in the political system at this level in the administrative structure of the Yoruba ethnic nation. In practice, the general public was free to attend sessions of the *Igbimo*. But as the tradition demands, they must keep their opinions to themselves. An individual attending the *Igbimo* session can only air his views when asked to do so, and such opportunities were given particularly when issues of general importance are discussed (Fadipe 1970: 212, Ejiogu 1994). In another angle, members of the *Igbimo* whose continued membership of the body is dependent on the approval of their respective lineages interact regularly with the other members of their lineage. They strive always to keep them informed on the happenings in the palace through their respective *baálè* or compound heads (Lloyd 1960b, Ejiogu 1994). Through the same channel, the people often expressed their wishes, when necessary, “to their *Oba*” (Atanda 1973: 4). In situations when a paramount ruler becomes a despot, the people usually compelled their representatives in the *Igbimo* to reject him.

In those pre- colonial Yoruba polities where the *Igbimo* lacked the constitutional authority to directly reject an autocratic *Kabiyesi* (King) through suicide; its members could initiate a popular revolt against him by refusing to appear at the *Afin* (Palace) each morning to pay him their obligatory homage. The withdrawal of such gesture



members on the basis of his seniority. According to Fadipe, it was solely through the *baálè* that the loyalty of the ordinary individual Yoruba is expressed “to the paramount ruler of the town or Kingdom and the central government” (Fadipe 1970: 211, Ejiogu 2004). This is crucial in a political system where there was not much abstract loyalty to country (Fadipe 1970:211).

If in addition to his age an individual who achieved the dual social status of *gbajumo* (gentleman) and *enia pataki* (man of principle) was elected *baálè*, members of the *ebi* often stood behind him. This is done not minding how bad the cause he so much believes in might be (Fadipe 1970: 211, Ejiogu 2004). The authority of the *baálè* included both judicial and legal autonomy in almost all issues that concerned the *ebi* and her members. Fadipe describes the *baálè* as “the chief law-giver and magistrate of the” lineage who is called upon to intervene and resolve ill-feelings between adult members that defied attempts by those involved to settle them (Fadipe 1970: 106). Except on issues that are in the exclusive list of the central polity, the authority of the *baálè* is the replica of the central government in both extent and practice. Such issues included “murder, witchcraft, incest violation, and the communication to women of the secrets of the secret society” (Fadipe 1970: 108).

The *baálè* pronounced punishments on offenders, particularly those found guilty in acts of theft, acts of sexual misconduct and ‘disrespect’ to elders by young people with flogging. In the case of persistent acts of theft and delinquency in young boys, he ordered severe flogging. There were situations when some *baálè* “even had dungeons of their own in which they imprisoned recalcitrant members of the compound” (Fadipe 1970: 109, Ejiogu 2004). The *baálè* collected assigned taxes from his lineage members for onward transmission to the central authorities. That gave him the opportunity to extract some surplus for himself. But that surplus was so paltry that it could not in any way be interpreted as extortion. It should best be seen for what it was part of the privileges and perks that came with his office. Generally, taxes were never imposed as burdens particularly on independent towns and settlements. They were “usually small and was intended principally to cover the cost of the annual propitiatory sacrifice to all the *òrìsà* (gods) worshipped in the community for the purpose of ensuring a peaceful and prosperous year. When the sum to be paid by the compound was declared, the *baálè* will in-turn fixed the amount

to be paid per head. But usually, the amount demanded plus the extra percentage added was small enough to be paid easily by members of the compound” (Fadipe 1970: 111, Ejiogu 2004). Tradition demands that “every member of the compound (*ebi*) owes undivided allegiance to the *baálè* in matters concerning the corporate interest of the members of the compound as a whole” (Fadipe 1970: 112).

**(vi).                                      *The Adugbo (Neighbourhood)***

The *adugbo* or ward is the mid-level in the administrative structure in the Yoruba political system. The *Olori Itun* or *Ijoye* occupies the highest position of authority in the *adugbo* in some places (Atanda 1973). According to the historical account of Atanda, the number of *adugbo* in a kingdom is determined by the size of the kingdom as well as how it was founded (Atanda 1973). Civil cases in a kingdom are handled at this level, provided they involve only residents of the same *adugbo*. When cases between members of the same *ebi* were not settled successfully by the *baálè* they were often referred to the *adugbo*. Investigations in criminal cases were carried out in the *adugbo* before they were transferred to the Palace (*Afin*) for the paramount ruler (*Kabiyesi*) and members of the *Igbimo* to adjudicate.

According to Idowu, the Yoruba believe in the same Deity (god) called Olodumare (Almighty). They speak the same Yoruba Language, although with some negligible dialects. The Western region has the largest concentration of African Traditional Worshippers (Worship Traditional gods). The belief in the magical efficacy of traditional gods by the Yoruba leaves no one in doubt on how deep rooted they are in the propagation and preservation of their cultural heritage. The account of Idowu, was further corroborated by Chief Okenla who stated that,

“In every Hamlet, Village or Town, there is always a Festival meant to celebrate a particular traditional god; and in most cases, women are barred from the public. Movement of people are restricted, especially Strangers and women. This is so because any woman who saw the nakedness of those men celebrating the Oro Festival will cease to be fertile”<sup>21</sup>.

The Oro Festival is a festival celebrated in every Town and Village in the Yoruba Nation. There are claims that human beings are used as sacrifice to the Oro gods.

And mostly Strangers are usually targeted for this purpose, especially those that stay out late in the night. There are also Christians as well as Muslims amongst the Yoruba. The mixture of faith or belief in the Yoruba family structure created a society that is not clearly defined along religious lines. It is common to find believers in these three religious bodies in one family. But despite their differences in belief, they do not fight against each other. There is a high degree of stability and tolerance amongst the Yoruba. Religious differences never resulted in conflict in the Yoruba Nation.

This can also be attributed to the fact that a Non Christian man can marry a woman from a Christian family, or the other way round, and the woman and some of his children might decide or choose to be Christians. Or some of their children could later decide to be Christians. The family structure in Yoruba Nation creates room for religious independence. Almost in every case, most children born in such mixed faith families ended up becoming Christians. The Yoruba People believed in Polygamous lifestyle. It is difficult to locate a single family in Yoruba land without a Polygamous structure. The marriage tradition of the Yoruba is so loose, such that it is not a taboo for a Man to marry more than one wife, neither is it also a taboo for a woman to marry more than one man, or to have children from other men even though she might be traditionally or legally married to another man.

The social life of the Yoruba is not controlled, monitored or restricted in any form. The Yoruba people enjoy a free society just like any other society in the developed world. People are free to mix up with people from all parts of the World. There is high literate level among the Yoruba. Every child boy or girl is required to go to school up till Senior Secondary School. In most families, the women are the bread winners as they are the group that provides food for the family. This is so because of the fact that most of the Yoruba women are into trades and businesses. They engage mostly in buying and selling of products, especially agricultural products and textile materials. The Yoruba, especially the women are very hardworking people.

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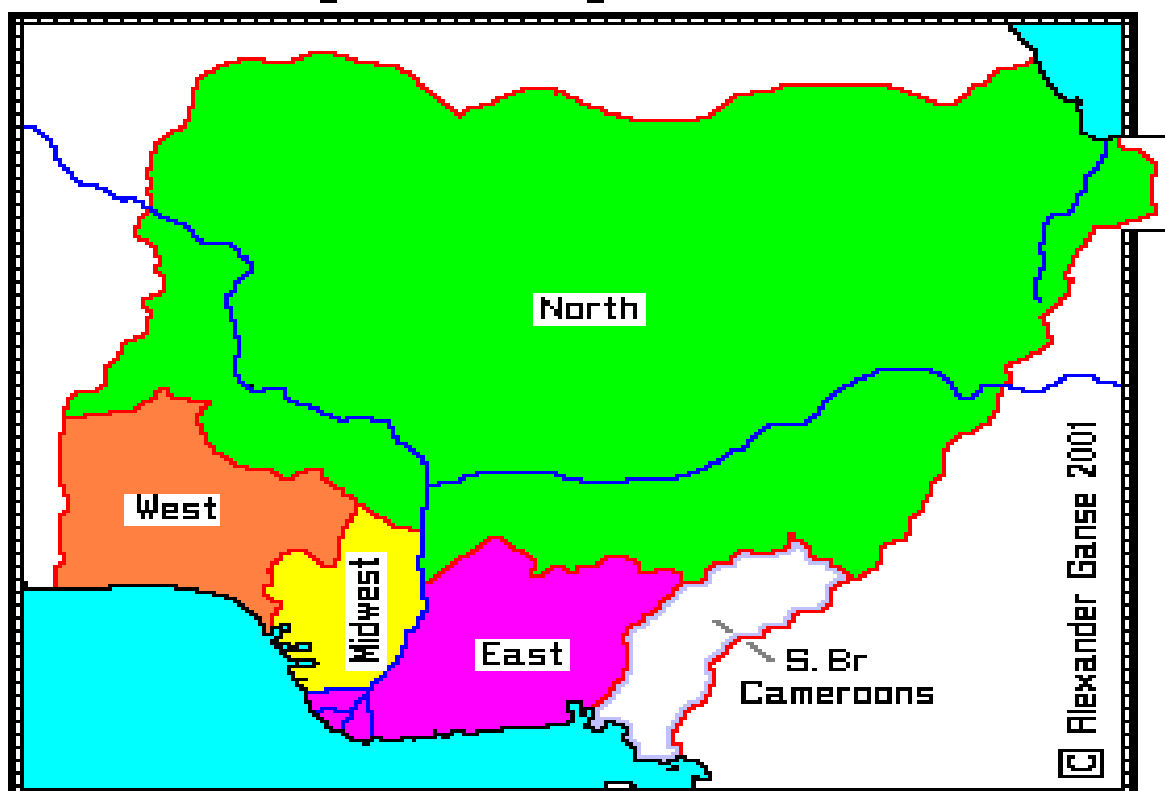
21. *Chief Animashaun Okenla was responding to an interview question about the Yoruba Traditional culture, it was conducted on the 23/10/2010 in Abeokuta*

### 3.8 The Hausa-Fulani in the Northern Region of Nigeria.

The Hausa or Habe and the Fulani or Fulbe were two distinct nationalities that assimilated one another to become a distinct block of people who are called the Hausa-Fulani (Smith 1960, Ejiogu 2004). That assimilation was the outcome of the Fulani conquest of the Hausa in their *jihad*, which was declared in 1804. Today, they speak the same Hausa language, practice the same Islamic faith (Smith 1960), and claim the largest share of the population of all the nationalities that inhabit the northern region of Nigeria. There remain pockets of pure Hausa who still profess and worship their traditional religion in this part of Nigeria (Greenberg 1947).

There is a considerable population of unassimilated Fulani who still speak the Fula language, in most of the northern parts of West Africa (Coleman 1958). But it is only in the north of Nigeria that the Hausa and the Fulani exist as homogenous mix of Hausa-Fulani. Thus, it is correct when we say that Hausa-Fulani is one of the several nationalities that inhabit the savannah grassland vegetation belt of Nigeria.

#### Nigeria : Regions, 1965



Map 3.12. Showing the regional structure of the country with British Cameroon territory (source. Alexander Ganse, 2001)

Like the other ethnic nationalities in the region, their environment impacted the evolution of their social, economic, and political organisation in some unique ways. They are also called Filani, Fellata, or Fula. (Ejiogu 2004). (See also Map 3.9. above, pg 87). The Hausa-Fulani dominate the green coloured area in the map known as northern Nigeria.

**(i) Administrative Structures in Pre-Jihad Hausaland**

The history of centralized political organization in Hausaland is extensive and predates Fulani conquest. Like the other inhabitants of the East and Western regions of Nigeria, the Hausa were able to evolve their own distinctive political system, which encompassed some measures of democratic trappings. During this period each Hausa village comprised of clans. Each clan was composed of several compounds, which were all basic economic and political units. A compound head administered each one of them. Compounds communally owned their land, the main factor of economic production (Ejiogu 2004). Understandably, the peculiar features of the Hausa political system were starkly different from what obtained amongst the Igbo and Yoruba. In Hausa society the compound head was basically a paternalistic administrator in his position. He was in charge of administering the labour of his compound members for the cultivation of their land. The harvests were kept in his care and he ensured that the proceeds from the sale were utilized for paying “the bride price for wives for the compound head and other members of the patrilineal group” (Greenberg 1947: 195, Ejiogu 2004).

Above the head of the compound was the village head who was usually the most qualified male from the most senior family in the lineage that first settled in the village (Yeld 1960). The political organization of each clan was such that “every office is traditionally assigned to a particular clan, and where a clan is dominant in a district, a majority of the offices, including the most important ones, were assigned to it” (Greenberg 1947: 196, Ejiogu 2004). The clan heads constituted the village elders who directed the affairs of their respective villages with the participation of the rest of the villagers. The oldest son of the eldest brother of a village elder usually succeeds him. Since participation was open to all villagers the political system of each village was predicated on the principle of direct democracy. But that was during a period in history, when society in Hausaland had not been transformed into large-scale political



structure and under a centralized administrative control. It was an era when the power configuration in the region had not been restructured in ways that marginalized subordinate members of their society for the benefit of few leaders who arrogated the task and power of directing society unto themselves.

Unlike the Igbo and the Yoruba who were protected by the natural barriers in their respective *homelands*, the geography of Hausaland exposed them to the misfortune of losing political independence to ambitious political actors first from within and then from outside (Ejiogu 2004). Long before the Fulani *jihad*, the Hausa witnessed the gradual evolution of centralized autocracy championed by fellow Hausa people which obliterated that distinctively indigenous and democratic Hausa political system. The political developments that robbed the Hausa of their indigenous democratic political system were initiated some time in thirteenth century when some Hausa groups began to evolve leaderships that acquired state building inclinations (Smith 1964, Ejiogu 2004). With time the ambitious leaders of those groups were able to found and transform a total of seven city states in Hausaland.

These city states are Biram, Gobir, Kano, Rano, Zazzau or Zaria, and Katsina. They went even further to transform themselves into all-powerful despotic rulers of their own people whom they made subjects. They assumed the title of *Sarki* or king. Later still, those same ambitious leaders founded additional seven states, Daura, Zamfara, Kebbi, Nupe, Gwari, Yaure, and Kwara. They classified them as vassals to their seven independent states (Lugard 1907/1997: 238, Ejiogu 2004). Hausa society under the *Sarki* rulers was highly stratified into rulers and their commoner subjects who were called the *talakawa* (Smith 1971). Those Hausa rulers routinely expropriated sufficient surplus values from their subjects with which they kept and maintained extensive courts in their respective capitals. According to Yeld, with the surplus resources that they realized from their subjects they were able to raise and maintain well-equipped standing armies with which they protected themselves, and their autocratic political system in Hausa towns (Yeld 1960, Ejiogu 2004). They utilized those armies to attend to the business of state building through which they extended the frontiers of their domains, and generated more resources with which they sustained themselves and their states.

Each kingdom was composed of districts, which were in turn made up of villages.

A district was placed under the supervision of a headman who possessed “considerable power in the regulation of the subjects in his district and was responsible for the collection of taxes” which were forwarded to the *Sarki* in the capital (Greenberg 1947: 196, Ejiogu 2004). But before the transformation, societies in Hausaland were simple and village-based with very low level of social stratification, trade and economic development.

Also, there was the absence of any “market institution and little slavery, although some occupational specialization had emerged” (Smith 1964: 167). There was a rampant tendency for the ruling groups that were evolving to reduce their neighbouring villages to tribute-paying fiefdoms. At first they mobilized their supporters and dependents into standing military forces with which they waged constant wars against the villages that surrounded them. They were quite effective in their utilization of horses, which thrived well in that tsetse fly-free savannah grassland zone (Smith 1964, Ejiogu 2004). The deployment of the horse in warfare went a long way to transform the leaders of these groups into efficient war makers who then extended the frontiers of their various domains with relative ease. Their conquest of additional territory translated to more extractable resources and enhanced their power in Hausaland.

***(ii) The role of Islam and the emergence of Autocratic leadership in pre-colonial Hausaland.***

Islam, which was introduced in Hausaland some time in the fourteenth century, became a factor that added a new impetus to state building and transformation amongst the Hausa. Islam’s supportive role in the evolution of autocratic political system can partly be attributed to its external origin. Its lack of a base in the indigenous culture of the Hausa became the enabler that favored the ambitious state builders who benefited from the interpretation of its tenets by the Islamic scholars who they permitted to propagate the faith in their domains. (Ejiogu 2004)

The rulers’ control of those Islamic scholars translated logically to their control over what they preached to the ignorant subject peoples who had already been reduced to

rent-paying tenants by the rulers. The increased resources that the state builders generated from their growing domains became a source of status and clout that they cashed in on to seek and create political alliance with well-established absolutist kings in the nearby Bornu Empire to whom they began to pay tribute (Smith 1964, Ejiogu 2004). That alliance with Bornu produced another set of boost factors, which improved their capacity to make war and transform the scope and character of their rule further. (Ejiogu 2004). Upon request the rulers of Bornu began to furnish them with support and guidance as well as the latest weapons of war (Smith 1964).

At this time when there were several other predatory power seekers in Hausaland, only those territories that were controlled by these ruling groups and their leaders existed as oases of order. They attracted people from their surroundings who sought security. With time these domains emerged as centres of trade and commerce, which attracted more people to them (Ejiogu 2004). The growth in trade and population yielded additional wealth from taxation for the ruling groups and subsequently enhanced their state building efforts and capacities. According to Smith, and Ejiogu all of the various factors and developments that enhanced and aided these ruling groups to achieve tremendous success in state building in Hausaland appears to have taken place at about the same period of time. The leaders who were guiding their state building endeavour took advantage of that coincidence and transformed themselves into kings. Not only that, their startling successes in conquest and domination of their neighbours even encouraged them to absolve themselves of all existing norms, that used to exact responsiveness on leaders in Hausaland in the conduct of public affairs (Smith 1964, Ejiogu 2004).

The interpretation that Islam prescribed for the enslavement of non-believers created yet another avenue through which these state builders who had by now emerged as autocratic rulers raised more revenue from the enslavement and even the sale of those that they captured in their wars. They embarked on the practice of deploying some of their captives to plantation agriculture, which yielded additional revenue with which they equipped their forces and campaigned more efficiently.

From the time when the Habe state builders embraced Islam and proceeded to adapt it to their state building activities, the role of Islam in the social, economic, and

political history of Hausaland was no longer as simple as it may seem to some observers today (Ejiogu 2004). Islam, which was introduced into Hausaland by Arab traders, promptly became the harbinger of commerce and trade that furnished the rulers with the skilled personnel whose expertise they tapped to develop and expand their state bureaucracies.

According to Ejiogu, without Islam and the skilled administrative manpower that was associated with its initial propagation in Hausaland, there is no doubt that those rulers could either have found it difficult or impossible to operate their predatory centralised rule (Ejiogu 2004). It furnished them with an invaluable political and ideological infrastructure with which they were able to impose their power over their conquered territories and subjects. Without the subservience preached by the Islamic scholars whom they favoured and allowed to operate in their domains, there is no doubt that they could have found it extremely difficult to achieve considerable control and dominance over the mass of subject people too. (Ejiogu 2004) It is true and evident therefore that Islam played a tremendous role in both the political and economic transformation of Hausaland.

Hausaland was still tottering on this system of rule at the time when the Fulani *jihad* was provoked in 1804. As observed above, Islam played an extensive role in the processes that led to their displacement. After the introduction of Islam in Hausaland by Arab traders, the propagation and the spread of its teaching was taken through to the next century by various Fulani Islamic clerics who plied their faith peacefully in some of the Hausa states, winning converts along the way (Yeld 1960, Bovill 1933, Anene 1970, Ejiogu 2004). The capitals of some of the Hausa states were playing host to Fulani preachers and Islamic scholars a couple of centuries later, to the point where many Fulani clerics successfully convinced some of the Habe rulers to convert to Islam (Yeld 1960: 113)

Those Fulani clerics who found favour in the courts of some of the Hausa rulers soon attracted members of other Fulani clans who found security for themselves and their herds of cattle within the secure walls of the capitals of those rulers. They became sources of military manpower and tax revenue for those rulers (Yeld 1960, Ejiogu 2004). What actually developed between those Hausa rulers and the increasing

population of Fulani Islamic clerics who they welcomed in their courts was a symbiotic relationship. However, it so happened that while some of the Hausa rulers employed the services of Fulani Islamic clerics and scholars, they either remained adherents of their traditional ancestral ways of worship or became just nominal Muslims by combining secretly Islamic practices with their traditional ancestral system of worship (Yeld 1960: 113).

That symbiotic relationship between the Habe kings and the Fulani Islamic clerics later led to a power situation in 1804. When that power situation came to a head it produced the *jihad* which one of the Fulani clerics called Usman Dan Fodio declared and led against the Habe kings in 1804 with the support of his fellow 'Town Fulani' and Hausa converts to the Faith (Yeld 1960, Paden 1970, Ejiogu 2004). That *jihad* gathered considerable momentum and ushered in Fulani rule in Hausaland.

### **3.8.1. Administrative structure in Post-Jihad and pre-colonial Hausaland**

According to Smith, the year 1810 marked the near complete conquest of Hausaland by the Fulani *jihadists* and ever since, much of Hausaland has remained under Fulani rule (Smith 1964). But for a cause championed by one individual who was inspired by the desire for political reform, the Fulani *jihad* was an event that produced a paradoxical outcome. Rather than restructure the despotic style of the Habe kings and create a new political system which would guarantee popular participation, the Fulani preferred instead to effect a change of guard and left everything else intact (Smith 1964, Paden 1970, Ejiogu 2004).

The *jihad* was used by the Fulani to basically assume political power in Hausaland and their quest assisted in deepening the existing autocracy further. Only minor changes were effected by Usman Danfodio and his followers in the system they sought to replace with new ideas. One of the minor changes affected through the *jihad*, was the designation of the Hausa states as *Emirates* by Usman Danfodio. He abolished the title of *Sarki* and declared his clan as the royal clan or *Sullubawa* and appointed its members *Emirs* to rule over them in his name as the Sultan (Paden 1970, Ejiogu 2004). But it must be understood that Usman Danfodio is from the dark-skinned Torobe clan. He made it possible for members of the *Sullubawa* to become the hereditary beneficiaries of all positions of authority in all but one Hausa state

(Smith 1960, Ejiogu 2004). That exception was the state of Zazzau where there were no hereditary offices before the *jihad*. The *Sullabawa* created a total monopoly over “territorial appointments and central decision-making increased” all over Hausaland even to the neglect of other Fulani clans whose members took part in the *jihad* (Paden 1970: 163).

Their monopoly was so complete that they even found ways to manipulate the appointment of personnel into administrative positions in places where circumstances would not permit them to do so directly. According to Smith, the case of Kano in 1893 was a testimony to this situation. Then, an Emir appointed by the Sultan lost out to a Hausa war lord in a power struggle, the Sultan was forced by the development to send his vizier to install the victorious as the new Emir (Smith 1964). However result proved that the *jihadist* utilised Islam more than the Habe kings to provide ideological support for their authority.

One other after effect of Islamic jihadist in the Northern region of Nigeria was the clear definitions that divided society in Hausaland into definite racial, kinship, residential, and religious categories. People of Fulani descent became superior to people of non-Fulani descent. Specific Fulani lineages were defined as superior to other lineages and kin groups. Muslims were defined as superior to non-Muslims. Muslim Hausa urban dwellers became defined as superior to nomadic Fulani on the basis of religion. Members of ruling families were defined as superior to commoners. Commoners were defined in the following categories in a ranking order: merchants and long distance traders, Koranic teachers, craftsmen, independent peasants, beggars and the physically disabled (Yeld 1960, Ejiogu 2004).

The economy and all economic activities were all subject to state directives. The ownership and control of land were transformed in their entirety in favour of the rulers. Commoners became disenfranchised serfs who worked the land according to strictly enforced stipulations of what they must surrender or keep. Taxes, tributes, free labour, and many more, were decreed into existence to create the surplus that sustained the rulers and funded their state bureaucracies (Ejiogu 2004).

Each *Emir* maintained a standing army with which he wielded his vast authority to exact compliance of the Sultan's directives on the subject people in his *Emirate*. A Council of Electors composed of hereditary members from ruling Fulani lineages was entrusted with the task of recruiting candidates into administrative positions. Specific directives stipulated the recruitment criteria that must be adhered to even though it was still the Sultan, who approved, confirmed and installed their selections. The Council of Electors was the institutionalised structure that blocked popular participation in the recruitment of leaders.

Each *Emir* had the authority to partition his *Emirate* into fiefs and also to assign them to his slave supporters to over-see on his behalf. These slaves who were not allowed to travel out of the provincial capitals without the *Emirs'* approval constituted the first link in the overall pattern of influence relations in the Caliphate society. It was through them that taxes from the fiefs got to the *Emir*. They also ensured that the *Emir's* army never lacked personnel. They derived their upkeep from part of the taxes that came in from their fiefs. What actually obtained in the Caliphate Empire was similar to tax farming (Ejiogu 2004). There was a stipulated amount that must go to the *Emir* as tax from each of his fiefs. By discretion, fief-holders extracted in excess of the stipulated amount in taxes that they retained for their personal use since they were required to give only the stipulated sum to the *Emirs*.

But since they did not reside in their fiefs they appointed their own slave agents (*jakadu*) to represent them there. The *jakadu* resided in the fief where he collected the taxes from the subject people through their village heads, ensured that manpower was raised for the *Emir's* army. It is his responsibility also to over-see the slaves who farmed the *Emir's* farmlands. Although the *jakadu* let the heads and elders of the villages in the fief have some semblance of authority, (Yeld 1960: 120, Ejiogu 2004). The *jakadu* were quite powerful figures who took the liberty to extort from the commoners. Each of those agents (fief-holders, *jakadu*) took the liberty to extort as much taxes as he liked from the commoners (*talakawa*). It was an elaborate system of control and expropriation. The overall pattern of influence attempts by super-ordinate actors in the Caliphate society is starkly different from what we saw in Igbo and Yoruba societies respectively (Ejiogu 2004)

As stated earlier, the people in the Northern Region are diverse, but the majority tribe in this part of the country are the Hausa-Fulani. They formed a dominant part of the population of this region. They could be defined as restrictive conservative bunch of people. As integral part of this Thesis, the researcher would want to take just a look at some of the salient aspects of life within the Hausa-Fulani Tribe and not the entire diverse tribes within the Northern region of Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani are dominantly Muslims. Most of them for reasons best known to them are fanatical about the Islamic faith. Like Shehu rightly said during an interview that,

“Every Hausa-Fulani person considers himself as an instrument meant for the protection and preservation of Islamic faith; and in that case every Hausa-Fulani person is ready to pay the ultimate price”<sup>22</sup>.

The family structure amongst the Hausa-Fulani tribe is directed or oriented according to the Islamic beliefs. A man can marry as many as four wives. That is to say, Polygamy is institutionalised and justified using Islamic teachings. The excuse that Islam allows those who believe in its teaching to marry more than one wife, enables the Hausa-Fulani to amass women to themselves.

The principle of marrying many wives leads also to the production of many children. Even though many of the men cannot really take care and show responsibility for the children, it does not in any way stop the men from marrying as many women as they wish. Most of the men especially the Fulani engaged in Cattle rearing, while the Hausa group engaged in Farming of Sorghum, Millet, Groundnut, Cotton seeds and Maize. They use rudimentary tools for their farming. They do not engage in mechanised farming practice which could have enabled them to farm and produce in commercial quantities. Most of their farm produce are in subsistence form. This means that a farmer produces only to meet his domestic needs, without any surplus for sales.

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22. *Alhaji Abdulkadir Shehu is an Islamic Scholar, and he was answering question on the state of the Hausa/Fulani and religion in Nigeria. Interview conducted on the 16/06/2009 in Kano.*



The general life pattern of an average Hausa-Fulani revolves around Islamic tenets. They are not good social mixers. This is so because of the fact, that they live a restricted lifestyle. The social relationship in this region is tailored around them. Western education is not compulsory within this community. Girls are more readily encouraged to acquire western education than the boys. Every boy child is expected to attend Islamic School. At the Islamic schools, the Kids are left with the Islamic teachers, and certainly without any agreed period of time. But most Kids usually spend up to 6 years. Though, a child could easily change from one Islamic teacher and school to another, which might also be in another town or city. It does not follow that a Child must spend the whole learning time by a particular Islamic teacher.

However, the social structure is derived from the cultural heritage, which the people inherited from their fore-fathers. And as was instituted by Uthman Danfodio, who led the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Islamic Jihad in Northern Nigeria, and which as result created or established the Sokoto Caliphate. Alhaji Abdulkadir Shehu further said that,

“The society is clouded by a strong structure of some kind of servitude and is based on the Islamic teachings”<sup>23</sup>.

The subservient system of relationship that operates in the northern region contributes greatly to the abject level of poverty that exists and has persisted in the region. The strict adherence to the emirate order was fortified by the Islamic teachings, which thrives deeply in the region. The deep rooted Islamic belief and self reservation to the teachings of the Imams and based on the Islamic tenets creates self made or man-made social system that is inimical not only to the development of an individual but the society at large.

As the culture and tradition within the Hausa/Fulani prescribes, the boy-child has no real childhood upbringing, and thus he is denied every sense of human development. The indoctrination of the Boy-child through the religious teachings and his being made to or subjected to live in a situation, not humanly conducive to his overall development make majority of them lose the consciousness to reason beyond their secluded environment. Every Boy-child is made to live outside his biological home. Like Dambatta, a strong critic of the Hausa-Fulani relational pattern reiterated,

“Such a Child is made to draw distinction to “Us and Them” Syndrome, as well as to view them as being different from other people within the country. Not to accept others as their equals or worthy to lead them. There is the Islamic religious indoctrination to reject any form of lordship from members of other religious faith. Then such people or non Muslims are regarded as Infidels.”<sup>24</sup>

The Boy-child within the Hausa/Fulani in Nigeria does not have formal social relationship with people outside his restricted environment. He has no normal family upbringing but is restricted to a particular social circle. They are strictly detached from the general public discussion. They do not engage in political discussion but often are employed as thugs to cause political mayhem and also in religious violence. They are trained not to ask questions but to abide to whatever the malams (Islamic teachers) instruct them to do. In his criticism, Dambatta maintained that,

“The Hausa-Fulani Society is structured in a way that nobody outside the structure dare raise political questions about the political correctness of any kind of action taken by those who command religious power”<sup>25</sup>.

The cultural dimension in the Hausa-Fulani environment, which derives its strength from the dominant Islamic belief in the area made politics to be somewhat elitist. The political decisions as it affect the society or local community is vested on an individual. Whatever such an individual deems to be politically practicable is applauded to be the best for the entire society. Nobody dares to ask questions on the legality or viability of such an intention. Anyone who raises objection to the suggestion of the political figure is regarded as an outcast for challenging a respected figure in the society.

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23. *Alhaji Abdulkadir Shehu is an Islamic Scholar, and he was answering question on the state of the Hausa/Fulani and religion in Nigeria. Interview conducted on the 16/06/2009 in Kano.*

24 and 25. *Alhaji Usman Dambatta is a strong critic of the social order within the Hausa/Fulani society in Kano City. He bared his mind critically and positively during an interview with the Author on the 18/06/2009 in Kano*

The Society of the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria is not one that is built on individual political equality of its people. The religious tenets, which the emirate system professes and propagated, do not give the ordinary individual the privilege to raise objection as against the authority of its leaders. There is a total submission to the religious figures within the Hausa-Fulani community. The social structure is deeply immersed in the Islamic faith so much so that individuals and families view it sacred to have their Boy-child sent to beg for arms and to live under the supervision of an Islamic teacher. It is not considered detrimental to the development of the child and the society. Instead it is viewed as a step towards the fulfilment of a true Muslim life.

Every aspect of the peoples' life within the Hausa-Fulani community is made to revolve around the Islamic induced social relationship. The subjugation of the people is helped by centralisation of both political and social relations authority in the hands of the emirs and the Islamic teachers (Malams) under the influence of Islamic faith.

### **3.9. The Population of Nigeria.**

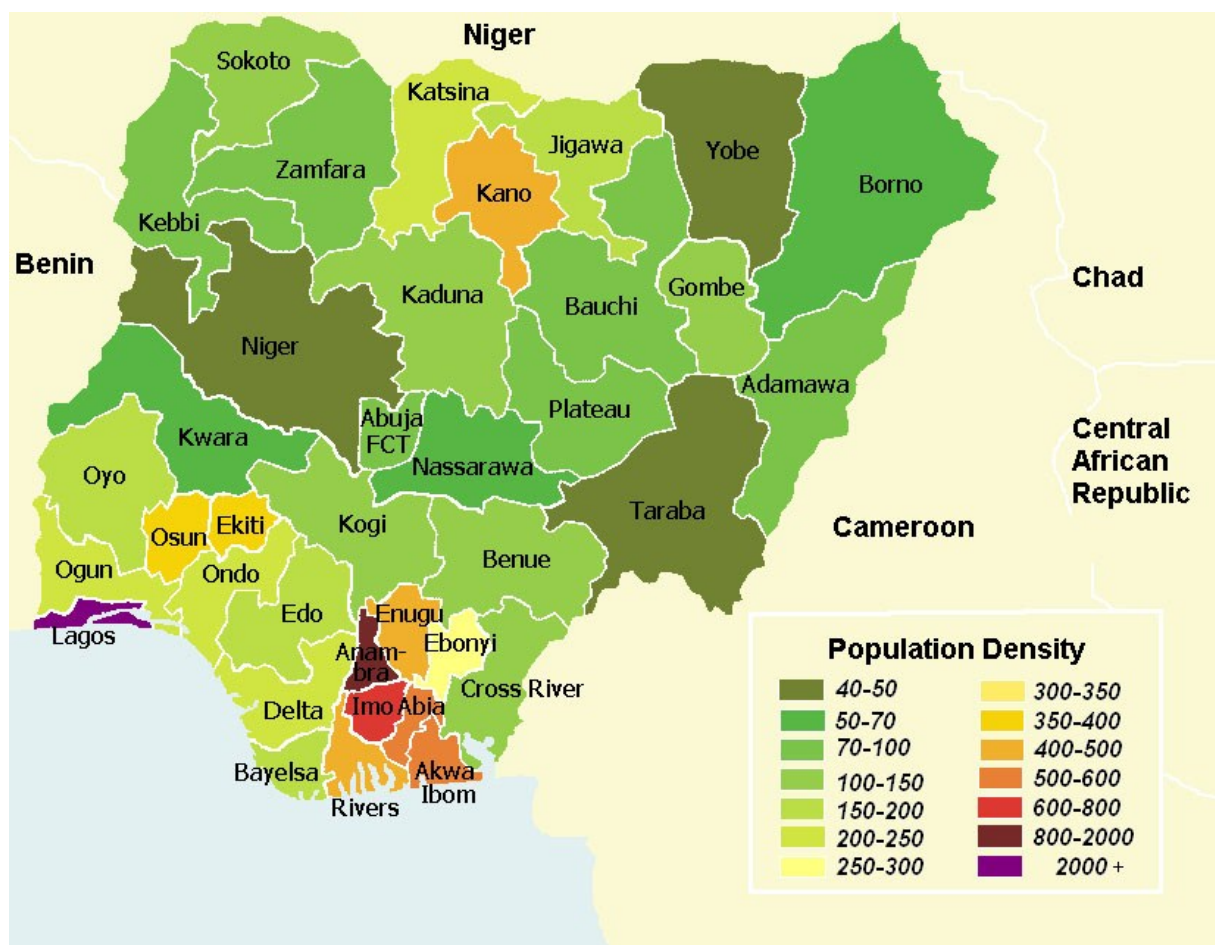
The actual population figure of Nigeria has remained elusive to not only Nigerians but the International Community as well. Nigeria's Population is not known, though it is one of the top Ten (10) largest populated countries in the World. Nigeria is currently ranked in the 6-7 percent of the World population not accounted for. For decades, Nigeria and the International Community have been working on population estimation, as no accurate population figure is available.

The recent population census of the country as conducted in 2006 and announced in 2007 was put at over 140 million people<sup>26</sup>. This non availability of accurate population Census data often led to inaccurate presentation of facts as regards the ethnic and religious composition of the Nigerian people. This has also led many scholars and experts to believe or assumed that the Muslims were in the majority but the internal truth is that there is no data to support or lay credence to such assumption. The census enumeration manual did not have provision for ethnicity, and religion. (See Map 3.13 and Map 3.14 below).

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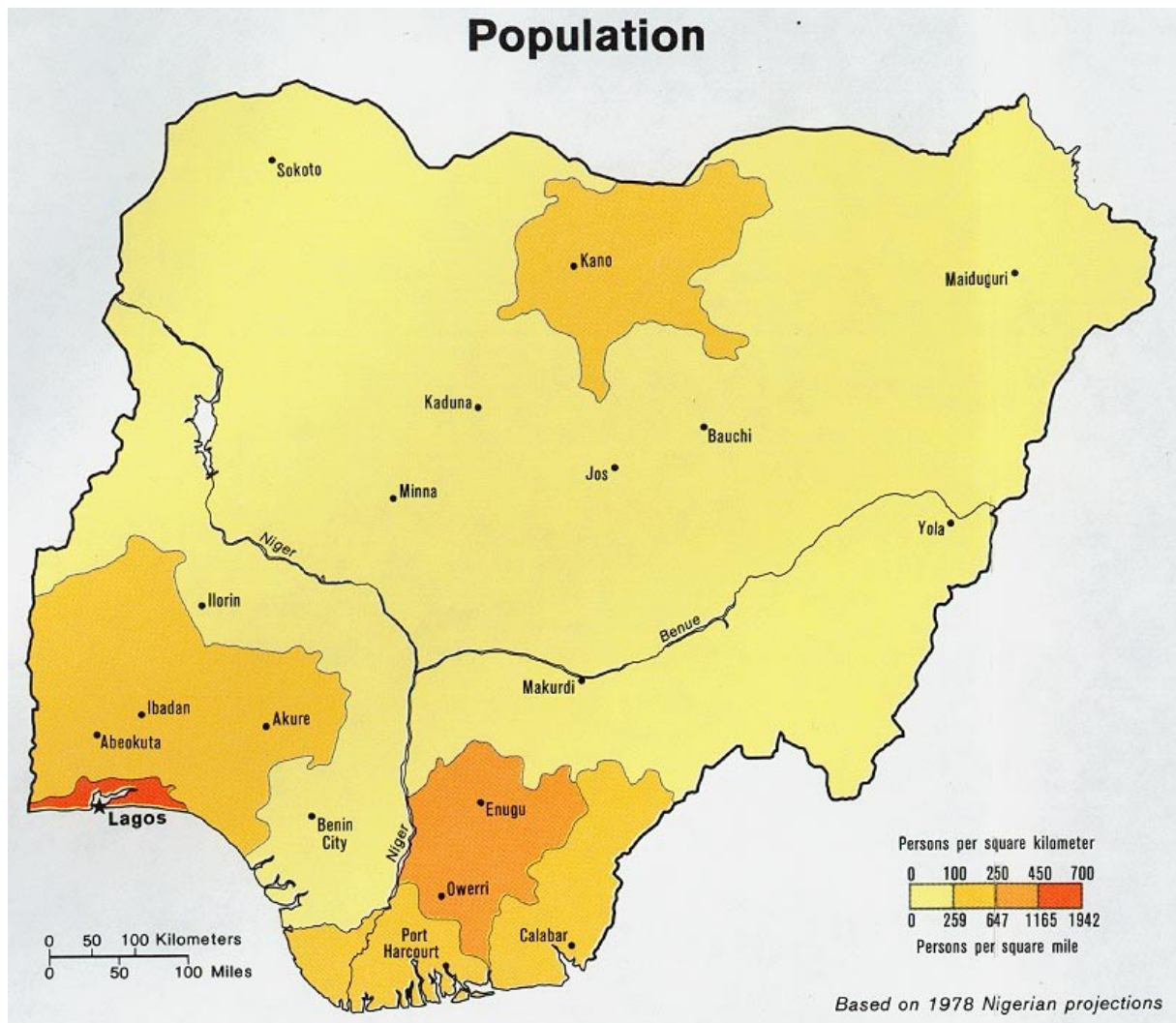
26. See *Daily Independent Newspaper*, Wednesday, 10/01/2007 edition.  
[www.dailyindependent.com.ng](http://www.dailyindependent.com.ng)

Map of 36 federal states in Nigeria and the population density



Map 3.13. Showing only the population density of the federal states (Source. Adapted from [www. Nigerianassociationutah.org](http://www.Nigerianassociationutah.org))

**Map of the 19 federal states in Nigeria and the population density.**



Map 3.14: showing 1978 projection of population concentration in the three areas choosing as case study. (Adapted from [www.mapcruzin.com](http://www.mapcruzin.com))

### 3.9.1. Ethnic Interpretation of Nigeria's Geography.

Looking at the composition of Nigeria, it will be noticed that the People are more divided than they are actually pictured by the country. As depicted by the Figure (3c) below;

A Diagrammatic construct showing the directional location of the three ethnic groups.

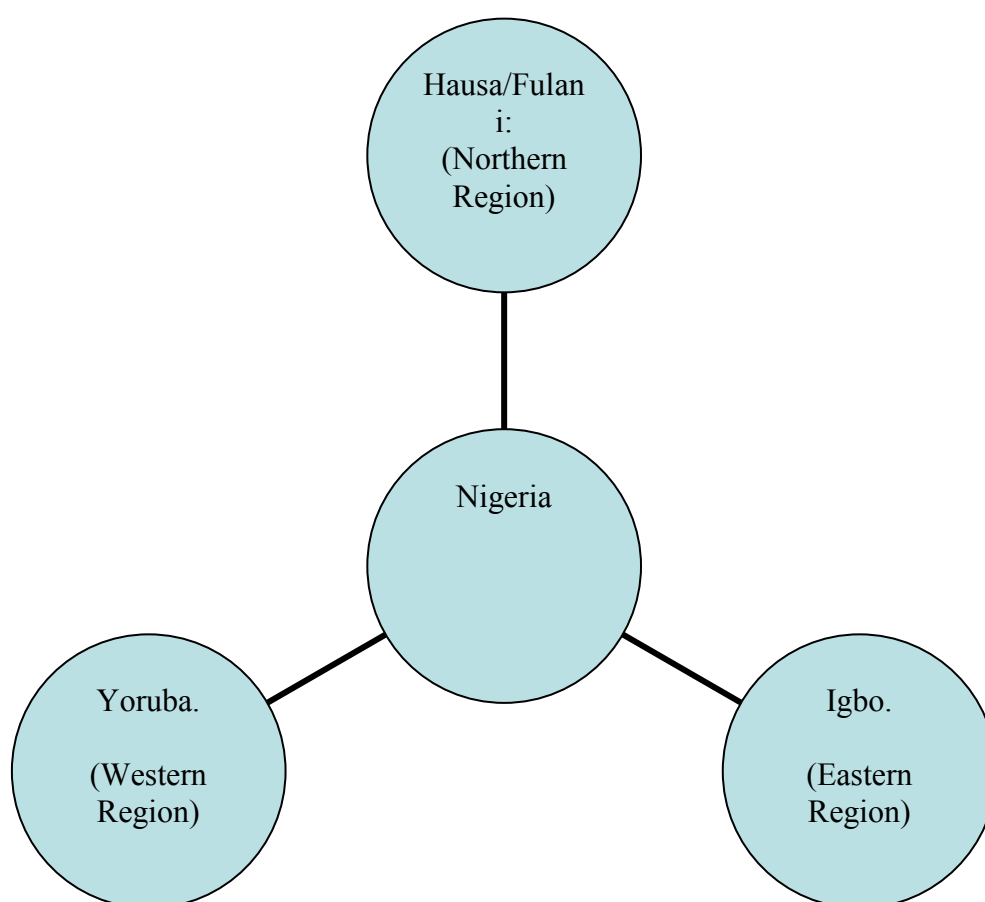


Figure 3.1. Depict the structure of the Igbo, the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba in Nigeria.

The diagram above clearly shows that the three ethnic nations that formed the greater part of Nigeria are not just humanly different but naturally different. By locating a given ethnic and tribal group within a particular space of landmass is an act only possible through the work of nature. By their separate locations, the tribal groups believed that they were meant to be different, and not just by their locations but by their natural endowments. Features that made them see and view each other differently. The ethnic and tribal groups are not in any way or form related, either historically or genetically. Anybody of Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa-Fulani extraction sees and views self as such. And by that, he or she regards the geographical location, where his ethnic or tribal group is located as his or her natural homeland.

The ethnic fragmentation of Nigeria's geography was reinforced by the introduction of political sectionalism and ethnic political Interest as above the national political interest of the country. This was broadly symbolised by the Hausa-Fulani political elites. The politics in the Northern Nigeria was personified through prominent Political actors like the late Sardauna of Sokoto; Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, and late Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and many other political personalities from the region.

The North actually formed a sectional political party known as the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), under the leadership of Late Ahmadu Bello, as well as the late Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who became the first Prime Minister of the Independent Nigeria<sup>27</sup>. The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) was the only major political party whose name did not even pretend that its primary zone of interest was a section of the country, and not the country as a whole.

In the West, a different political ideal was created and championed by late Sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who formed the Action Group.

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27. *The Late Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, and the Late Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello were the two Political Leaders of the Hausa/Fulani dominated Northern Nigeria. Both of them were killed during the January 15. 1966 Military Putsch in Nigeria.*

The philosophy of the Action Group was to view the nation through a strong regional prism<sup>28</sup>. The overall idea behind the formation of Action Group (AG) in the Nigeria pre-independence and post-independence years was purely to protect the Yoruba interest within the Nigerian political environment. Though unlike the NPC, the Action Group was by and large a Yoruba political Party. It was conveniently formed only for the good of the Yoruba. It was to be used as a bargaining point with other hitherto existing political interests in Nigeria at the time.

But on the other hand, the NCNC was another dominant which after independence joined the NPC to form the post Independence government. Though, it was formed with a more national appeal. But then because of the primary regional tendencies of her other two counterparts, the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) rapidly lost its national appeal and went eastward. Under the leadership of the late nationalist, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, it became a political rallying point for the eastern region of Nigeria.<sup>29</sup>

All these political developments created a stunning aspect of life in Nigeria that, no matter how long an individual spent in another part of the country other than his natural homeland, he or she cannot qualify for anything from the host community or federal state. This is a result of the ethnic interpretation of natural homeland and the indigenisation policy in place, not only in one region but in every town and region in Nigeria. Even the recent idea being canvassed by some people within the Nigerian political class, which says that any Nigerian who has lived peacefully in a state for a certain number of unbroken years and fulfilling all the required civic obligations can enjoy the privileges as an indigene, including scholarship, appointments to public office and voting and being voted for.

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28. As the Premier of the western region of Nigeria during the pre-independence period, Chief Obafemi Awolowo used his Action Group to create Political identity of the Yoruba.

29. *Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was the leader of NCNC during the independence conferences, and he became the President of the country after Independence from Great Britain.*



As exciting as the idea may be, it is simply unrealistic. It is unrealistic for many reasons. The first thing is that, indigene right is not something you can convert anyone into through legislation. Every cultural settler groups is known to live separate from their host communities. Even when such group have stayed for decades there, they do not intermingle internally and culturally with their hosts or imbibe local traits that could transform them properly as natural creation of that locality.

There is none of the ethnic or tribal groups in Nigeria that participate in any local festival in the local communities they are resident of, or have a great deal of respect or regard for the culture of the people they live among. If anything, they always try to establish the presence of their own cultural identities. They carry on in ways that only create room for mutual suspicion, distancing, fragmentation, fear and hatred.

The major reason why the indigene factor is stronger than the citizen in Nigeria is traceable to the very founding principles of Nigeria's polity. As was earlier mentioned, Nigerians do not come from a common background; they do not share the same historical definition as obtains in some countries. For instance, all Germans, apart from the naturalised immigrant workers belong to the same Germanic race, shares the same myth and cultural heritage.

But Nigeria was amalgamated in 1914 by a foreign conquering power for the sole purpose of its own administrative convenience, and since then Nigeria has remained an amalgam. In the opinion of Obafemi Awolowo, one of Nigeria nationalist Leaders, Nigeria is but a mere geographical expression. And therefore, all the lofty ideals listed out in Chapters III and IV of Nigerian 1999 Constitution about citizenship and the fundamental human rights of citizens remains but a mere constitutional expression<sup>30</sup>.

These ideals do not have any bearing on the reality of relations between an Individual from a given ethnic or tribal group and the very locality such an individual may reside in Nigeria.

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30. *Nigerian 1999 Constitution, Chapters iii and IV. This contains the right of citizens of the country.*

The reality is that an indigene remains an indigene, and a citizen remains a citizen. So, there is a big difference between an indigene and a citizen in Nigeria. Being a citizen does not qualify anybody to become an indigene. Someone can only qualify as an indigene, if the biological father of such an individual naturally hails from a given village or town within a federal State in Nigeria. One might be a Nigerian citizen and at the same time not qualify for privileges in the community he or she resides as a non indigene.

The foundations of the polity were not laid out to nurture citizenship. Rather, it was created for the benefit of the indigene. Those who lived in Nigeria before her independence readily bear witness to the fact that Nigerians felt more at home, secured and fulfilled outside their hometowns or areas of origin than they do these days. Igbo politicians once thrived in Western Nigeria, especially Lagos.

But that was as a result of the fact that Lagos at the time was a Colony separate from the Western region of the country. So the politics played in the Colony of Lagos was very different from the kind of politics available now in the area, more so when Lagos is no more a colony of its own, but a federal State within the Yoruba ethnic homeland. Today, even though the Lagos State Government free education for primary and secondary students is for all residents in the State, the government does not name streets after non-indigenes anymore. No matter how successful an individual might be, provided such an individual belongs to another ethnic or tribal group, there cannot be any kind conferment of indigene right to such a person.

In a federal State of Zamfara, streets are freely named after non-indigenes who have contributed immensely and meritoriously to the overall development of the State, but the free education policy of the government there is only for indigenes. It is that way in most states in the North. The making of the weak citizen, strong indigene syndrome, as noted before, has its roots in the ways the political foundation of Nigeria was laid. In response to the issue of indigenisation policy of the government in Nigeria, Professor Matto explained that,

“When the British colonialists were about to go, the sprouting local elite were seriously concerned about the situation their tribal groups would find themselves in an independent Nigeria. Nobody wanted to be placed in a disadvantageous situation. Ethnic unions were formed to train young people to take up posts the White man was leaving behind. The North, for instance, in 1950 launched a successful fund drive within the region known as “Taimakon kudin Arewa” and raised over 11,000 British pounds which was used to educate and train some of their today elites. Almost all the beneficiaries of this fund drive have participated or are still participating in the heights of governmental activities in Nigeria”<sup>31</sup>.

Actually, information revealed that the fund realised by the Northern region in the 1950 fund drive was originally meant to send a strong Northern delegation to the pre-independence negotiation between Nigeria’s Nationalists and the British colonial Government, but when Northern leaders found out that they did not have to spend it in that direction they invested it in education.

All these considered, provided information on how the Leaders of the various ethnic and tribal groups in Nigeria played politics. It readily shows that they were all sectional leaders. The Northern political elites at the time did what they believed was in the best political interest of their people, just like their counterparts in the Western and in the Eastern regions of the country, who were also building up their human capital with a view to maintaining their advantages over others and catching up where they were behind.

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31. *Professor Kabir Matto is the Head of Studies, Department of Political University of Abuja. He was commenting on the political state of Nigeria during an interview with this author on the 07/07/2009 in Abuja.*

### **3.9.1.1. Religious Interpretation of Nigeria's Geography.**

It is difficult to imagine or determine the role of religious belief in most secular societies, especially in societies that practice democratic politics as means of state governance. It thus follows that religion does not have any constructive platform in democratic philosophy. But it becomes delicate when an integral part of the democratic environment becomes so deeply entrenched in religious philosophy. The role and position occupied by religion in Nigeria create a worrisome state. This is evidently noticed in the northern part of the country. To most of the Nigerians from this part of the country, politics must be dependent on religious belief of the people, and so everything in politics must revolve around religious consideration. Majority of the people around the states of Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Kano, Katsina, Borno, and other fringe states in the Northern part of Nigeria believe that the religious identity of an individual determines his political role, as well as his existence and relevance in the society.

Most of the people within this geographical separated part of the country believed internally that it is only a Muslim from that part of the country has the right to rule Nigeria. Not even a Yoruba Muslim is ever deemed fit or qualified to rule the country. This factor emerged from the fact that Hausa-Fulani people do not regard anybody not from their ethnic stock to be genuine Muslim.

The shaping of political actions through religious prism in Nigeria's democracy creates an undesirable philosophy in the polity. Many people and of course electorates are affected by the religious identity of a contesting candidate in a democratic election. According to Dr. Iro Uke, an individual candidate is detested not on account of his qualification for an Office, but instead an individual contesting for an elective position is detested and adjudged by his religious affiliation<sup>32</sup>. An individual is not judged through his antecedents as provided by his previous records, but an individual is believed to be qualified for an elective position only if he is identified through a religious line.

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32. Dr. Iro I Uke is a senior Lecturer in Political Science, University of Abuja. He was commenting on the question religion and politics in Nigeria.

In every national political office, the argument has always been that of religious identity of a selected individual for a post. A typical example of this political drama emerges during national elections. Political parties are forced to base their political calculations on the strength of the religious combination of their candidates. Whereby in the case of the position or political responsibility, if the head of an establishment is a Muslim, then his deputy must be a Christian, and vice versa. This ranges from the position of the President to the Ministers.

For the fact that the first political arrangement in the country after independence was based on the religious line of the parties and individual politicians, it becomes a trend that must be satisfied by any political party. This picture created a political belief in the minds of many individuals in the country. Some people thought it to be an exceptional political right of their religious group to rule.

Nevertheless, when considered, the effect of religious attachment to politics in Nigeria is very obvious. It affects every aspect of political stability in the country. It poses a deadly stress to democracy in Nigeria. The people of Igbo extraction do not excessively place much premium on the religious affiliation of anybody, be it politician or non politician. What is of most importance to majority of the people is the qualification of the candidate as well as the political arrangement agreed upon by the sponsoring political party.

According to Chief Charles Egumgbe, the people of Igbo extraction on their part are less concerned about the religion of an individual candidate contesting in any democratic election in the country. But then, the structure of the government does not give the people the confidence to believe that their general thinking is necessary. Their fears are usually confirmed each time an appointment is to be made at the national level of government. He argued that, the Igbo person is always at the receiving end, whenever an appointment is to be made in any government establishment.

### **3.9.1.2. Political Interpretation of Nigeria's Geography.**

Nigeria before 1885 was a land mass occupied by several ancient nations and civilizations, each with its own history, language, mythology, political systems, and cultural values. The pre-Nigeria or pre-colonial nations in what is known today as Nigeria include the Edo, Hausa, Igbo, Fulani, Ijaw, Itshekiri, Gwari, Nupe, Tiv, Idoma, Kanuri, Calabari, Efik, Yoruba, and so on. Some of them were even acknowledged by the British colonial administrators to have built kingdoms and empires long before the Berlin Conference of 1885. Those nations included the Kanuri, Sokoto, Gwandu, Benin, Oyo, and many others<sup>33</sup>. (See also Map 3.4)

It was the amalgamation of Nigeria on January, 01, 1914 that brought the multiple nations and nationalities in today's Nigeria together into one country. The amalgamation was at the instance of Sir Frederick Lugard, who was then the Governor General representing the colonial British Government. He was a strong believer in the principle of concentration of political power in the centre or unitary system of political arrangement. Until 1922, Nigeria did not have or operate on any written constitution or working document.

With the first constitution, the Clifford Constitution of 1922, the North refused to participate in the country's first deliberative council over nation-wide administration. To prevent the North from reverting to the situation before 1914, the Richards Constitution of 1946 tried to create three regions with some measure of recognition of the special needs of the three regions. Governor Arthur Richards may have introduced that as the best way to strengthen the unity of the country by so trying to encourage the regions to develop each along its characteristic lines.

Richards' romance with regional structuring of the amalgamated geographical areas that formed Nigeria was later built upon by Governor Macpherson, who became the colonial Governor of Nigeria after Governor Richard's tenure. He modified the Constitution introduced by Richard's administration to a new one, which was then christened as Macpherson Constitution of 1951. It implies that any colonial Governor, who came to Nigeria, has a modified colonial Constitution named after him.

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33. Amaechi, Obiakor. (ed) (1999), *the History of Nigeria* (Ibadan, University Press)

This constitution gave more legislative and executive responsibilities to the three regions, while still giving more concessions to the North that was given 68 seats at the Central Council while Eastern Region and Western Region each got 34 seats, as a compromise on the initial demand by Northern Emirs, especially the Emirs of Zaria and Katsina for 50 seats to complement 25 seats each from the two southern regions<sup>34</sup>.

The Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 created more modification to the Macpherson Constitution. The Constitution as it was introduced by the Governor Macpherson administration tried to assuage the fear of leaders of the North about possible domination by the South. It was this Constitution that was later polished to create the Nigeria's Independence Constitution of 1960<sup>35</sup>.

During the negotiation for the 1960 Constitution, each of the three regions opted for sharing of responsibilities between the federal and regional governments. The Northern Region recommended that there should be a federal system of government in Nigeria and that in addition to a central legislature, there should be regional legislatures with powers to legislate on a number of specified subjects and also on such other matters as may, by legislation, enacted by the central legislature, and to be vested in the regional legislatures<sup>36</sup>.

The Eastern Regional Assembly recommended that there should be a federal system, with a central legislature and regional legislatures. It also recommended that the regional legislatures should exercise only such powers in any matter as the central legislature may delegate to them. The Western Region recommended that there should be a federal government consisting of states formed on an ethnic or on linguistic basis but that for the time being, there should be only three states, namely, Western, Eastern and Northern. It further recommended that there should be a federal parliament and state parliaments, and that the state parliaments should be competent to legislate on all residual matters not specifically included within the legislative powers of the federal parliament<sup>37</sup>. The position and recommendation of the Yoruba on the way out of the constitutional crisis was a replication of the minority reports by Mbonu Ojike and Eyo Ita, which affirmed that grouping of Nigeria along ethnic and linguistic units would serve to remove the problems of boundaries and minority dangers threatening Nigeria<sup>38</sup>.

The 1963 Republican Constitution was given legislative support through acts of federal and regional assemblies. So between 1946 and 1963, Nigeria had moved considerably away from the centralist or unitary governance that the amalgamation of 1914 symbolised.

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34 – 37. *Dibie, Chris.C. (ed) (2008), Essential Government in Nigeria (Lagos, Tonad Publishers Ltd)*

38. *Mazi Mbonu Ojike and Eyo Ita were two prominent politicians from the Eastern Region of Nigeria.*



### **3.9.1.3. Traditional Institutions, National Question and Democracy in Nigeria.**

The natural structure of the Nigerian State creates an identity problem that runs counter to political development of the country. The composition of the ethnic nationalities before the colonial era in the country testifies to this. It is clear to establish the differences that have endeared in these areas.

Looking at the physical appearances of the people that made up or formed the various nationalities in Nigeria; it is so clear to distinguish between an individual who is a Hausa-Fulani from Northern region of Nigeria to an individual who is Igbo or Yoruba from the Eastern or western region of Nigeria.

Traditionally, the ethnic groups do not share the same political philosophy. This is so because, of the fact that, the various traditional political institutions in the regions do not share any resemblance. The Hausa-Fulani in the Northern region with their emirate political institution influenced by Islamic injunctions, created a feudal system of administration.

In the period preceding the 1999 democratic election, the political consideration in the northern part of Nigeria derives its strength substantially from the dictates of the local emirs and Islamic teachers. The politicians do not have to depend solely on their individual popularity to excel in elections. A politician must solicit for the total support of the various Emirs and influential Islamic teachers within and outside his electoral constituency.

There used to be an Islamic influenced organised political participation and block votes in the town and villages of Northern Nigeria. The Hausa language is also another catalyst to the success of the block vote system. Everyone in the region speaks the same language, so it becomes so easy for them to be organised and messages passed across without passing any other medium. So in every region and within every ethnic homeland, the language of the people is usually the medium of communication. The language barrier is another strong hindrance to the progress of democratic politics in Nigeria. To be able to campaign effectively in every part of the

Federation, an individual candidate and his political party must have the capacity to switch from language to another language as the campaign moves around.

Then unless a party has this language capacity it will be difficult for the party to pass her message across to the teeming populace who are illiterate, and cannot speak other available language other than their ethnic language. For instance, a local Yoruba man or woman, who resides in the inner-most part of the western region, does not have the capacity or capability to switch to any other language spoken in Nigeria. Then an individual, who hails from another region, and who speaks another language, other than the Yoruba, or any other tribal languages in Nigeria, must have surrogates, who has the capacity to inform everyone within the local communities about his programmes and intentions, on the language that the local people understands.

Furthermore, the traditional political structure in the western region of Nigeria under the influence of Oba and Baale systems created a similar structure as was the case in Northern Nigeria. This system created also a feudal nomenclature though on a lower level than that of the North. An Oba or Baale in Yoruba ethnic nation is the embodiment of the ethnic culture and he is the connector of the people with their Ancestors. He does not derive his authority through the Islamic teaching or through Christianity, but through the decision of the native gods. So, the authority of the Oba or a Baale is not and cannot be subjected to alien religious practices.

On these premises was the foundation of democratic politics in Nigeria based on. Subsequently, it led to the establishment of political philosophy structured under the ideals of ethnic consciousness. It is only the Igbo, who by nature are egalitarian people, and who do not have to subscribe to any traditional political Institution.

The purpose in the present study will be adequately achieved, if the issues generating “negative mindset” among the three ethnic nationalities Nigeria is properly analysed and the means for the reversal of this negative mindset is developed. It will also assist in the development of democratic politics devoid of ethnic bias in the country, and as well as establishing good governance that enjoy the legitimacy of the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani nationalities.

### **Summary of Chapter Three**

Without overemphasising the political, and social, development that existed within the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani ethnic nationalities during the pre-colonial period, they were very distinct, and unique. As attested to, there is no historical evidence which supports the view that before colonialism anybody or group of persons tried to bring the Igbo under a single centralized administrative system. Politics and administration in pre-colonial Igboland were totally local, limited in scope and democratic. Apart from some of the Igbo groups that inhabited in northern and north eastern Igboland, all Igbo groups evolved and retained a decentralized political system that share a range of similarities (Ejiogu 2004). The very few exceptions noticed are found within the groups' members who were resident in northern Igboland, and who may have borrowed their centralized monarchical political systems from their Bini, and Igala neighbours. Conversely, the administrative structures and politics within even the northern and north eastern Igbo residents do not also look different from the general political nomenclature of the Igbo that is based on limited and democratic governance.

As the administrative Systems operate in one corner of the Igbo homeland, so does the sociological traits and the relations that support them come into play. There is unrestricted access to personal economic independence at the individual level and political autonomy at the group level in every Igbo society. The Igbo society is an egalitarian one that functioned through built-in sociological mechanisms that in turn provided mediums through which the individual and groups benefited from each other without being isolated from social, economic and political activity within the homeland. It was through those mechanisms that the Igbo, a predominantly agricultural people, were able to develop trade and commerce amongst themselves and with their various neighbours. According to the position of scholars like Isichei (1973, 1983) about the relative political stability that prevailed in the many autonomous enclaves within the pre-colonial Igboland, indicate high level of resemblance within the Igbo administrative systems.

In contrast to the political structures in Igboland; the political development in Yorubaland is configured in a different way. Indeed in a way so different from the

political configuration in Igboland. The administrative structure and power configuration in Yorubaland was monarchical, constitutional and also centralised. The Yoruba nation developed large-scale administrative structure. This was made possible through the use of war as an instrument of state building by the Yoruba leaders. But someone may be right to say, that the administrative systems and power configurations, which progressed from family setting on the local base, and from where it further progressed out to the *Ilú*, played a significant role in check-mating the temptation often associated with power, from allowing the Yoruba leaders becoming despots. But unlike in Igboland, direct democracy and the chance for every qualified adult individual members of the larger society were not so strong in Yorubaland.

Comparatively, there was a stark difference in political development as experienced in Hausaland, when examining the structure of administration in other existing ethnic nationalities of Igbo, and Yoruba. What is to be seen in the Hausa-Fulani northern Nigeria is a totally different political configuration and consciousness, far separated from what prevailed in both Igboland and Yorubaland. In Hausaland, what can be rightly described as an age-old non-large scale, non-centralised and democratic system of political organisation was displaced, and replaced by the personalised rule of a group under the leadership of Usman Danfodio.

The Sokoto Caliphate under the leadership of Usman Danfodio, and his appointed Emirs were successful in building and transforming the respective towns the Habe despotic rulers built in Hausaland in a manner that politics, power and administration became institutionalised, rigidly centralised, and the society highly stratified into lines of rulers and the commoners (*talakawa*). The enormous authority and power wielded by the Habe rulers was centre on their ruthless capacity to extort wealth from their subjects. Indeed, it is their actions that laid the foundation and also fostered the 'traditional shape' of Hausa society. Their rule instigated and contributed also to the success of the Fulani *jihad* through whose forces they were overthrown. However, one of the significant legacies of the despotic rulers in Hausaland was the absolute power, and authority structure that they utilised to sustain their regimes. After assuming power, the Fulani jihadist who forced the Hausa rulers out of power found the institutions they built quite useful. But in the light of the size and diversity of the Caliphate Empire there can be little doubt that the Fulani could not have done

otherwise. The size of the Caliphate as was constructed on the ruins of the Habe states and the desire of Usman Danfodio, and his Emirs to reserve the administrative power in their specific lineages, formed the basis for the adoption of the structure of the regimes they replaced.

However, the Yoruba were able to control their leaders from turning into despots, by institutionalising their political structures through centralisation. They were also able to cage all the elements of autocracy and despotism and shut them out through their refusal to accommodate the dynamic integration of centralisation and large-scale administrative structure into their politics. Popular participation in the organisation of each of the three arrangements in Yoruba society became the counter force that checked attempts by self-interested actors to become despotic.

In the case of the Igbo, it is a known fact, how they doggedly guard against any form of systemic centralization or large-scale administrative format in their social, economic, and political arrangements in order to protect popular participation. No one or group was able to bring all the sections in Igboland and their neighbours into a centrally controlled structure. It was not until the economy of Igboland was co-opted into the trans-Atlantic slave trade that the Aro Igbo assumed dominance over the supply side of the slavery portion of the Igbo economy. Although, some sections in Igboland were known for black-smith, medicine, divination and so on. But in nutshell, no one tried to or was able to centralise and control any aspect to the point where participation was rationalised as was the case in Hausaland.

In the politics of Igboland and also in Yorubaland, both the high and lower members of society retained and enjoyed the right to work the land, fish the water ways. The only exception is, if such was traditionally or religiously forbidden. The people are equally free to engage in trades. And they are free without any form of hindrance whenever the need arises for them to take their products or produce to the marketplace for barter-trade.

**Hypotheses 1 and 2** will be tested in chapter 5 with the submissions that we have made so far in this discussion. The Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and the Igbo did achieve significant level of social and political development in their respective regional

homelands. One important fact remains the finding, which establishes that there was no uniformity in their respective ways of social and political development. In addition, a remarkable level of differences is observed in the structures of their respective administrative systems, power configuration, social and traditional institutions. Finally, all the given variables in terms of the differential patterns of political, and social development, capable of resulting to failure in the performance of any institution, particularly in a state comprising multi-ethnic nations are all present in the 'Nigerian' state.

### ***(i) Retention of the Administrative Structures in the Three Nationalities***

Are the indigenous administrative systems as operated by each of the three nationalities still in existence? This question requires at this point strong attention in the analysis of the three ethnic nationalities. However, one can answer the question or try to proffer ideas based on the following backgrounds. Apart from the Hausa and the Fulani who as result of the Islamic jihad mixed with one another, years before the British extended their influence to Nigeria, to produce one nationality every other nationality has remained homogenous and separate. There is therefore a resemblance in character and action between the maintenance of their distinctiveness and the persistence of the various segmental units through which their norms and values, which include also the administrative systems are nurtured and transmitted across time and generations.

The effort embarked upon by the colonial government in state building did not succeed in any way to dismantle the homogeneity of each of the *homelands*, and particularly in terms of their historical heritage and attachment which defined the reason why the areas are so inhabited by the nationalities. However, several towns and cities came into existence within the three homelands during the colonial period and after the withdrawal of the colonial administration. But still, they attract people from all nationalities despite their existence in the different homelands. Each *homeland* was and still remains a homogenous composition. This is particularly so because of the reason that each one of them still contains the majority of the members of a given ethnic nationality. People usually leave their *homelands* and go to those cities, irrespective of where a town or city is located. They reside in those

towns and cities not as indigenes but as strangers to seek economic progress, and this they do without dropping their natural as well as their sociological affiliations with either their ancestral *homelands* or with members of their kindred that they left behind. An individual resident of an urban town is expected to identify himself quite closely with his community and also others who hail from the same community with him. This the people do through the various ethnic and communal associations that they form in those towns and cities, and particularly for the exhibition of a common solidarity.

Put differently, an Igbo resident of a city in any part of Igboland would be expected to join both his village and village-group associations each of which is organised as and functions like a segmental unit. Also if the individual is resident in any city in Yorubaland or Hausaland the associations that he will be expected to join certainly will include the Igbo union. The basis of the above clarification therefore goes to support the argument that each nationality is usually conscious of her ethnic identity.

Each is sociologically well structured to creatively engineer ways that would not alter their peculiarities and distinctiveness. The intuitive assumption then is that so long as the family, the kindred, the lineage and the other segmental units that distinguish the nationalities from one another are not phased out in their fundamental essence, they will continue to function as transmitters of values and norms, and thereby continue to shape the political outlook and outcome in the country.

## Chapter 4

### **4. The effect of Ethnic - Mindset in Politics between the three ethnic Groups of Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria.**

The political environment in Nigeria is clouded in so many ways. But the salient and the most apparent, is in the area of ethnic mindset. This is not only noticeable among the active participants in democratic politics, but also among the passive participants in the Nigerian political environment. Ethnic mindset in this sense refers to the total expressed and unexpressed feelings by the three ethnic nations against the other in Nigeria.

It is an established fact, and an undeniable truth that every individual from any of the three ethnic nations under study, does not see himself or regard someone from any of other two ethnic nationalities as belonging to the same political society. Nor do they regard each other as having the same opportunities in the country, be it political, economic, educational or otherwise. In schools, fees are discriminately charged. In some ethnic regions that operate Tuition free Schools, indigenes are exempted from School fees, and non indigenes are made to pay for the same teaching services they enjoy. There is a quota for indigenes and also for non indigenes, even though all are equally the same Nigerian Citizens. Teachers are recruited on the basis of ethnicity and on the strong belief that the beneficiary enjoys indigene status. It is not based on qualification and availability of service.

Politically, people from other ethnic regions are scarcely accommodated at the state or local levels of the political parties top hierarchy, even though some ethnic nations form a substantial part of the population in these areas, but still they are denied any sort of quality representation that commensurate with their contribution to the well being of the state. They are denied access to many State Institutions; they are not consulted in any way in terms of economic policies and programmes. They are only to be governed, and not to form part of the governance.



As in some federal states like Zamfara, Yobe, and Kano in the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern Nigeria, the Igbo and the Yoruba are exempted from the government free education Programme. Then, it does not matter if someone is born in the Town of which he is a resident. What matters most, is the origin of the biological father. It also does not count, if someone has lived all his life in another town other than the natural Homeland; that is, the ancestral town of such individual biological father.

The Mindset culture as found within the three ethnic groups superseded what someone can politically manoeuvre. The “Ethnic Mindset” that exists results in the creation of frames. These frames cut across ethnic groups, with each ethnic group identifying others in certain ways through the use of these created frames. The frames are not political, neither are they social attributes, rather they are Mindsets internally invented by each group to show how different they feel about those from other ethnic nationalities. The use of derogatory descriptions of people of different ethnic identity is a common practice in Nigeria, especially between the Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, and the people of Igbo extraction.

#### **4.1. Internally invented Frames between the Three Ethnic Groups of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria:**

It is common to hear someone of Igbo extraction refer to someone of Yoruba descent as „Onye Ofe N’manu“ (Someone, who makes Soup with lots of red Palm oil) “Onye Ofe Ose“( Someone, who makes Soup with lots of Pepper); or a Hausa-Fulani referring to a Yoruba as “omo Yoruba, or yorubawa” (a Yoruba person, or Yoruba people). On the other hand, the Igbo and the Yoruba always refer to a person of Hausa-Fulani as „Aboki“(a friend), or „Malam“(teacher), „Onye Awusa“(Hausa person) or „Omo Awusa“(someone of Hausa origin). A Yoruba person does not view a Hausa-Fulani person passionately neither does an Igbo view a Yoruba constructively, without any negative feelings and Vice versa. The Yoruba on the other hand, view anybody of Igbo extraction as a very clever person that nobody should underrate. Nobody describes or refers to anyone as a Nigerian rather what everybody keeps talking about is the name of the ethnic groups. Either somebody is identified as Hausa person, Igbo person, or Yoruba person. (See Map 1.1 in chapter 1).

The internally generated ethnic bias is reflected on everything that has to do with leadership and power control within the country. The political structure and practice in the ethnic homelands of the Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo do not recognise the contribution of each other in their midst. Within the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani homelands, the Igbo are regarded as mere economic adventurers. The Status of economic adventurer partly account also for the reason behind the practice of not according the Igbo any political relevance in the host ethnic homeland of the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani. According to opinion generated through questionnaire interviews in Enugu (see figure 4.1 below); the consensus of opinion among the participants was that there would be a perpetual fear of possible domination among the Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, should the Igbo ethnic group be allowed to add political domination to its economic control over the two ethnic homelands.

Do you agree or disagree that other ethnic nationalities are afraid, that the Igbo will dominate them politically and economically, if allowed to rule the country?		
A	I totally agree	15
B	I disagree	5
C	Maybe	4
Total:		24

Figure 4.1: displaying the participants' responses to a questionnaire question on the issue of domination fears of the Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani against the Igbo. (Okoro, 2010)

The focus-group interview for the above data was conducted in the vicinity of Enugu State University of Science and Technology; and the participants were drawn from among the Students of the faculty of Social Sciences and particularly from Political Science students. The data collected showed that total of 15 participants from a total of 24 persons totally agreed that there would be certainly be apprehensions among the Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani communities should the Igbo ethnic group assume political power. Only a mere 4 persons from the 24 individuals said, maybe there would be some sort of fear in the two communities of Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba. While only 5 participants disagreed with the notion that fear of being dominated by the Igbo would pervade the Hausa-Fulani, and Yoruba communities. The data result implies that the Igbo people certainly are aware of possible reactions from the other two contending nationalities should there be changes in the power equation in the country.

According to the figure from the National Population Commission (NPC), the people of Igbo extraction accounted for an estimated 45 percent of the total population of over 9 Million residents in Lagos State for instance. But nobody of Igbo extraction controls any of the Local Councils. Even the individuals appointed in the State executive merely control non essential governmental agencies. They are allocated to areas nobody knows about their existence in the administration. This situation made a social critic, Okonkwo, to say that;

“although the Igbo are ranked as the largest ethnic group after the natives of every State, Town or Village, within Nigeria; but their Population does not translate to political influence in the areas, and I will attribute that to negative mindset against anything Igbo, and it does not give we the Igbo people the chance to be recognised according to our contribution in our host communities”<sup>1</sup>.

In any way, it is not only the people of Igbo extraction that suffer political neglect in their host communities. The Yoruba ethnic group is equally treated in the same way or even worse than the Igbo. Ironically, it is assumed easier to see a person of Igbo extraction considered for government appointment within the Hausa-Fulani environment, than for a Yoruba person. But the reason for this trend cannot be explicitly explained, but ordinary it is usually easy for a Hausa-Fulani and an Igbo to consummate business relationship than say someone of Yoruba extraction.

In the Igbo homeland, the Yoruba resident in the area are typically passive in everything going on within the area. They are hardly noticed, but their number is also partly responsible for the non recognition they are suffering largely in Igbo ethnic homeland and minimally within the Hausa-Fulani homeland. The only thing going for them is that the Yoruba are free from physical attacks from the Hausa-Fulani.

But in his opinion, the Director of research of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) Mr David Dogoh maintained that, it is no longer the Igbo alone that are prone to the Hausa-Fulani attacks. He said,

“the Yoruba are increasingly facing the same fear and uncertainty like the Igbo resident in the Hausa-Fulani Northern Nigeria”<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time another contributor, the Director of Research, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) reiterated that,

“the few Hausa-Fulani resident in the Yoruba Homeland are also dangerously not feeling safe”<sup>3</sup>.

He cited the several violent attacks against the Hausa-Fulani resident in Lagos, Ibadan and other parts of Yorubaland as evidence that it is not only the Igbo and the Yoruba that are frequently confronted with violent attack. There are some people who in like manner the above mentioned politicians believe that violent attack is certainly connected to ethnic mindset.

In another focus-group interview conducted at the University of Lagos, Seven out of Ten students who participated in the interview were of the firm opinion that negative ethnic mindset, rather than economic inequality or political domination is largely responsible for the incessant ethnic clashes recorded in some parts of the country. But then, there are also other people who questioned the theory of ethnic mindset as the source of violent conflict as experienced in Nigeria. Nevertheless, ethnic mindset is natural, but what is not natural, is the ethnic mindset that evolved and enveloped itself with violence.

Do you believe that negative ethnic mindset is playing any role in the frequent crises in some parts of the country?		Do you agree that economic inequality and political domination are responsible for the tribal attacks in some parts of the country?	
I agree	7	I disagree	5
I disagree	2	I agree	3
Maybe	1	Maybe	2
Total.	10	Total.	10

Figure 4.2: showing participants responses to a question on negative mindset and crises in the country (Okoro, 2011)

Figures generated from the two questions presented clear response from the participants. In the first question as presented in the left column, total of 7 participants agree that ethnic mindset was indeed responsible for the frequent violent attack against people of other ethnic nationalities especially in the north of the country. Only

2 respondents disagree to accept the suggestion that ethnic mindset plays any significant role in the steady skirmishes in the north of the country. Whereas in the second question, half of the participants disagree with the notion that economic and fear of political domination were responsible for the problem in the north; while just 2 participants submitted that economic and political domination maybe responsible for the frequent violent crashes in the northern part of the country.

As a result of negative mindset, some people interviewed and who were of Igbo and Yoruba extractions have the feeling that every Hausa-Fulani person is a usurper and an opportunist, and indeed a dangerous parasite in Nigeria. But feelings alone without an established working mechanism between the Yoruba and the Igbo cannot result in any meaningful political change in the country. Yes both the Yoruba and the Igbo share the same political feelings against the Hausa-Fulani to a certain extent, but both do not accommodate the political interest of the other. It is one thing to detest the political posturing of the Hausa-Fulani, but it is another thing to develop a working political measure, that could be potent enough to challenge the political clout of the Hausa-Fulani.

The Mindset problem is a reminder of the first republic politicians and the political culture they succeeded to establish and bequeathed on the country before and after Independence. The many scenarios playing out in the political arena in Nigeria at present are direct results of the politics handed over to the country by those who fought for her Independence from Britain. Even among the Nationalists at the time, there was disagreement, and total repudiation of action plans by sections and individuals in the country. This created also in the three homelands political problems within them and against each other. It resulted in the establishment of ethnic political opinion and mindset within the populace. But then, the overall interest of the opposing parties was not for new political order, rather it was purely leadership struggle. Each of the opposing parties in the three regions had the same intent, and that was to wrestle power at the national level. The political animosity that existed between the three ethnic groups did not abate, even after the 1979 reintroduction of civilian government in the country. Within the various registered political parties, the core interest of the ethnic groups, who formed membership of the parties, remained the same.

The Yoruba political class as well as non politicians has mindset that they are in political contention with the Igbo. Majority of them contend that, allowing the Igbo any political space will make them lose their political relevance in the country. Ordinarily, it would be assumed that the Yoruba and the Igbo could successfully challenge the Hausa-Fulani political hold on the country, should they put their differences aside and unite. According to Mathias Ezeoba,

“the problem of pride, which envelopes every Yoruba person stands as the greatest obstacle to the possible political alliance between the Igbo and the Yoruba”<sup>4</sup>

He argued that, the fear of political defeat on the side of the Yoruba must be removed from their political calculations, if actually there is going to be any Southern Nigeria political alliance against the Hausa-Fulani political domination. But having conceded the economic dominance of the Igbo, it would be fool-hardy to also expect that the Yoruba would be ready to subscribe or concede to political dominance of the Igbo. In his response, Emmanuel Echeoma insists that,

“the Yoruba always feel threatened by the Igbo, more than, say the Hausa-Fulani”<sup>5</sup>

But such feeling may not be without reason. The political detachment between the Igbo and the Yoruba is not a recent event. The two ethnic nationalities parade good number of well educated people in the academia, as well as large number of travelled men and women. But the political mood before 1999 created a very difficult situation for the present politicians within the Yoruba and the Igbo ethnic groups. The entrenched political dislike and distrust that arises between the nationalities of Igbo and Yoruba as a fall-out of the 1964 federal parliament election in the western regional assembly has alienated the two sides from each other.

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1. Samson Okonkwo, a social critic on Nigeria issues based in Lagos, interviewed on 16/10/2010

2. David Dogo, the Director of research ANPP, interviewed in Abuja on 04/06/2009

3. Alhaji Garba Albali, Director of research, ACN, interviewed in Abuja on the 09/06/2009

Although the political animosity nose-dived after the Independence of the country, but the anger caused by that singular act between the Yoruba and the Igbo grew wings as soon as Nnamdi Azikiwe moved in 1956 to the eastern region to become the Premier. The Yoruba Members of the NCNC in the western regional Assembly decamped and joined the regional Party, the Action Group<sup>6</sup>. At that moment the political map of Nigeria changed for the worse. It became the Action Group for the Yoruba, the NCNC for the Igbo, though it prides itself as national political party and the NPC also for the Hausa-Fulani. The political disagreement also led to the creation of the Mid-western region that is home of the binis known also as edo people. (See map 4.1 below). Then in 1979 democratic dispensation, the pre Independence as well as post Independence political leaders emerged once again, but with the exception of Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, and Alhaji Ahmadu Bello. Both gentlemen politicians lost their lives in the 1966 failed Military takeover of government.

#### **4.2. The Nigerian factor and Politics: The Old Order.**

The Nigerian State before the year 1999 was a society under the iron hand of military men and women. There was no freedom of association or avenue for the people to organise themselves under any political ideology or political umbrella. But the scenario changed as soon as democratic politics was restored in the country in 1998. The re-introduction of democratic politics in Nigeria reignited the more or less inactive ethno-phobia in Nigeria's polity. The question of who is to be the next leader, and what ethnic identity as well as the religious leaning of that individual or ethnic group should be, dominated the political discussion in the country.



Map 4.1 showing the four regional territories in Nigeria. (Source, adapted from [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org))

The political rivalry between the ethnic people of Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo of Nigeria became evident again, thanks to the end of military rule. The question of individual ethnic allegiance could be described as one of the bedrocks of democratic politics in Nigeria. Prior to 1999 return to democratic politics in Nigeria, there was no measured strategy tailored, or created to minimise the effect of ethnic mindset in the political field.

Political arrangement is usually made or entered through regional political party interests. Allegiance is formed between two regional strong parties. Then in the past, political parties are driven by the popularity of the Individual founders. Better still, parties are formed and membership is generated through the political philosophy of such single individual, as well as the ethnic identity of the person.



Political activities were previously based on personality, or in another word, politics in the country was personality driven. Personalities like late Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and Malam Aminu Kano. These individuals were at various times leaders of their political parties. These parties are, The Nigerian Peoples Party, The Unity Party of Nigeria, and The Peoples Redemption Party, respectively. However the absence of these individual political heavyweights did not eclipse the belief of many of their Students and followers.

In the Western region of the country, the political scene is dominated by elements propagating the Chief Obafemi Awolowo political philosophy. This is based on his political theory of Yoruba for the Yoruba, Igbo for the Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani for the Hausa-Fulani. The Yoruba ethnic group always creates a political platform for the propagation of Yoruba Interest. Mathew Mbu, a veteran politician from the eastern region, and an ardent supporter of Nnamdi Azikiwe maintained that,

“the Yoruba always believed that Nigeria is a political battlefield; where every ethnic group needs to strive harder so as to able to command respect and relevance”<sup>7</sup>.

This is evident in the overwhelming support and acceptance the Action Congress of Nigeria enjoys within the Yoruba Land. The Action Congress of Nigeria is a political party with Yoruba core Interest as it is backbone. The Party derives its philosophy from the defunct Action Group (AG) and also the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). The two mentioned political parties were previously formed and led by the Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo. The Majority of the Yoruba ethnic group continued to this present time to identify with the political philosophy of the Man, even many years after he passed on.

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4. Mathias Ezeoba, is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Zurich, interviewed on, 20/02/2011

5. Emmanuel Echeoma is social Commentator based in Enugu. Interviewed in Enugu on, 08/10/2010

6. Dr. Iro I. Uke is a Senior Lecturer Department of Science University of Abuja. Interviewed in Abuja on 06/06/2009

7. See Ambassador Mathew Mbu, Vanguard Newspaper, Nigeria, Online Edition, 12/12/2009, [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com)

The political lens used by Awolowo to look at politics in Nigeria during his time, is still the same political lens being used by his students in the present day democratic politics in Nigeria. And that is, through his philosophy to dominate the political landscape of the country, and if not possible to create a bargaining platform within his ethnic homeland.

Among the people of Igbo extraction, there is no given political party that commands absolute loyalty or dominance. There is no Party that enjoys absolute sympathy of the Igbo. The Igbo are politically open to other ethnic groups, although with a minimal political relation with the Yoruba. But on the other hand, the Igbo are relatively open politically to the Hausa-Fulani dominated northern Nigeria. The Igbo politicians are scattered in the various registered political parties.

The Hausa-Fulani ethnic mindset is absolutely influenced by religious tendencies. In whichever political party the Hausa-Fulani commands a large membership the element of religion is usually brought to bear on such a party. Besides, they always strive to be the determinant factor in every political party they belong to. Politically, they do not detest joining or forming alliance with any ethnic group provided her interest is guaranteed and protected. The ordinary Hausa-Fulani politician may not show any sign of natural political hatred against anybody from other ethnic nations, but the ordinary individual in the villages and other remote areas in the region always harboured certain grievances against other ethnic groups, particularly the people of Igbo extraction. The hostility between the two ethnic groups is constant, and without any known remedy. None of the root causes for the violent attacks either in Kano, Jos, Maiduguri, and Kaduna against the Igbo or Christians has been determined.

The natural hatred always results in bad and negative political mindset on the part of the ordinary Hausa-Fulani person against the other two ethnic Nations of Igbo and the Yoruba. The Hausa-Fulani never pretend about their uncompromising stance on Islam and the political equilibrium in the country. Therefore the political mindset created within the Hausa-Fulani community is partly derived from religion and partly from their ethnic identity propelled by the ethnic language; the Hausa language. The Hausa-Fulani politicians do not have preferred political counterparts. To them, any group that could provide them with the necessary political cover or alliance stands as

their partner. A testimony to this are the various coalitions the Hausa-Fulani built with the Igbo ethnic politicians in the past. The 1963, 1979, and the coalition of politicians from the two ethnic nationalities in 1999 that led to the formation of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) confirm the previous statement (Alex Gboyega 1997)

In pursuing their political interest, the Hausa-Fulani politicians always have the feeling of leading other Non Hausa-Fulani Nigerians. This posture always instils in the mind of the majority of the ordinary Hausa-Fulani the idea of right to rule in Nigeria. This makes it also somewhat difficult for any meaningful cross ethnic political concession to emerge between the three ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani.

The different political mindsets emanating from the three ethnic nations under study, do point to the fact that the politicians are not actually creating avenues capable of ameliorating the established bad political opinions against each group. The Ethnic mindset of the Hausa-Fulani electorate against any candidate from the other two ethnic groups is difficult to measure. This is based on the fact that there are no indices that could be used to determine the level of the effect, Or otherwise to measure the reason for their inability to see leadership quality in individuals outside the Hausa-Fulani stock. Elections are usually characterised by ethnic sentiments, and so, interested individuals are confined to their natural homeland.

It is so, because individuals and groups always strive to win elections, based on the local factors. These are factors that are purely human made barriers, such like ethnic origin of a contesting individual, the religious affiliation of the individual contesting, as well as the nominating political party. It is unthinkable for any political Party in the Yorubaland to pick an Igbo or Hausa-Fulani person as its candidate during elections. The same thing applies within the Igbo, as well as within the Hausa-Fulani communities.

#### **4.2.1 The Nigerian Factor and Politics: The New Order: 1999 to 2011**

In an effort to break away from the old political order in Nigeria, many individuals organised themselves into different political groupings. But prior to the 1999 democratic elections in Nigeria, and afterwards, it thus emerged that, there were no difference in character of those in active politics. The only noticeable point in the polity is the minor changes in the personalities of the politicians. According to Obasi Igwe,

“The political intentions and body language of the present politicians showed no mark of difference with their political models”<sup>8</sup>

He was actually referring to the Leaders of the leading political parties in Nigeria as of present. He argues that, from the PDP, to ANPP, and downward to ACN, and APGA, and lately CPC and Labour; the leaders of the parties exhibit the same kind of political manoeuvre and intentions buoyed by ethnic interest. He went further to argue that,

“the overall interest of the majority of the leaders is to control the central government, using the vehicle of their ethnic oriented political party to influence the national political landscape, and not necessarily creating an enduring national political interest”<sup>9</sup>

If in any way the political philosophy of the people like the Bola Tinubu is to be considered, then the answer to the argument of Obasi Igwe will not be far fetched. It is the same philosophy of politics based on self realisation, which the great Yoruba leader, Obafemi Awolowo created, practiced and bequeathed to the Yoruba that Bola Tinubu, and the other eminent Yoruba politicians are preaching. They are using the same method like Obafemi Awolowo, and on the same political environment. Just like their mentor, the idea was to build a base within the Yorubaland as first agenda, and then move outside the Yorubaland into the national politics, using the already established political structure as a bargaining power.

The Action Congress was an off-shoot of Alliance for Democracy, a Yoruba political party. Most of the members are former members of Alliance for Democracy, who moved out of the party to form the ACN, this include the Party National Chairman Bisi Akande, and also the National Leader Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu. An interesting thing in all these Yoruba based political parties is the use of Alphabet A. From the time of Obafemi Awolowo, to this era of Bola Tinubu, there is always the use of the Alphabet "A".

The parties are the Action Group, to Alliance for Democracy, and now to Action Congress of Nigeria. The only difference was in 1979, when Obafemi Awolowo formed the UPN. But then UPN was the reincarnation of Action Group, this is because the UPN embraced every aspect of the defunct AG. It was only named UPN to make it appear more national in outlook, but practically it remains the same Yoruba oriented political philosophy.

#### **4.3. Political Parties and Ethno-Political Interest of the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani.**

In every political democracy, parties are meant to provide the citizenry in a given society the opportunity and platform to become either active or passive in the democratic process. The citizens are supposed to make use of the opening provided by the various political ideas in the society to participate in several ways and under several capacities.

These capacities can be in the form of an individual citizen participating either as a candidate, where such an individual seeks votes contesting for an electoral political position. Or as an individual, who chooses not to vie for any electoral Office but to participate as a voter. The casting of his or her vote during the balloting will go a long way in helping to decide who wins in the election. Then, an individual citizen who decides to contest a political Office will be doing that by representing a particular ideological direction. It thus means that such an individual must be sponsored by a legally registered political party.

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8-9. Obasi Igwe, a Professor of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, interviewed in Nsukka on, 23/11/2010

However, political parties in Nigeria are not formed on the basis of structured ideological vehicle. This reality makes it somewhat difficult to place politicians in Nigeria in a particular ideological circle. The parties neither function as representing an ideological constituency, nor do the members of the parties exhibit political qualities that could classify them as belonging or representing a particular political thought.

The absence of parties formed on ideological lines can also be traced to the fact that party formation in Nigeria was never based on ideology. Secondly, people who formed the parties are never known to belong to any particular ideological line. Then for a political party to have ideological direction, it must be seen that those who formed the nucleus of the party organ identify with or are connected to a given political idea. This is so because, for a political association to be ideologically classified, the members must also be ideologically identified.

The public being the determinant of political progress in every democratic environment needs to have strong views of registered political parties wishing to solicit votes. Then, it is generally assumed that the more the public are aware of programmes of a political party, the more chances and acceptance such a party will enjoy at the Poll. Inability of political parties to connect with the general public, in order to create much desired awareness stands as a major deficiency in the political environment of Nigeria. The parties do not allow the ordinary individuals, who formed major part of the electorate to have an insight into the many promises they vouched to deliver to them.

Average of two out of every three respondents interviewed in the three ethnic homelands said that they have not sufficient knowledge about the manifestos of the parties they often vote for during elections. People in the understudy ethnic nations go to the polling booths to cast their ballots, though not on the strength that they have ideas about what the parties stood for. So when an elected official failed to deliver the dividend of democracy to his constituency, it becomes no issue. This is so for the fact that, there was no prior binding commitment or covenant between the candidate and his electoral constituency. So he becomes above the law and also above censor. Nobody will hold him accountable for lack of performance.

In a questionnaire interview, most of the people who responded to this particular issue, maintained that they do not have any knowledge about the party Manifesto. Most people interviewed only said that,

“they voted for the Party based on the fact that, they know most of the personalities in the parties”<sup>10</sup>.

In all, only a fraction of the public has access to the electronic media. Then, majority of the people, who ultimately form the bulk of the electorate, do not have access to the parties. The system afforded the politicians a free political ride, as they cannot be held accountable by anybody not even the electorate. The same scenario plays out in the local councils where elected Councillors become dominant and untouchable.

But the parties and candidates are not also in any way helping the local voters to internalise their programmes. The majority of the parties are too disconnected from the people. It is because of the fact that the politicians are divided into two parts. One part is the group of politicians based at the federal state levels, and the second part is the group of politicians based at the Federal Capital, Abuja. The second group are essentially politicians at the National Assembly and members of the Federal executive. There is hardly any sign of coordinated political effort to alleviate the massive suffering the populace in the country-side are going through.

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10. Responses from people interviewed through Focus-grouping in Enugu, Kano, and Abuja within the three ethnic regions. 19/05/2009 – 16/07/2009, and 24/10/2010 -16/12/2010

#### 4: Hypothesis

##### **Is it ethno – regional interest or National Interest that formed the basis for the formation of political parties in Nigeria?**

The 1999 General election was a clear case of ethnic consideration on display. The three major political parties were formed by politicians, and they were essentially derived from the 1979 political set up. The PDP was an offshoot of National Party of Nigeria (NPN) touted to represent all sections in the country. The All Peoples Party (APP) emerged also as an offshoot of the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) and the Great Nigerians Peoples Party (GNPP). These two Political Parties were purely conservative in approach, and the NPP has its strongest base in Eastern Nigeria, and that highly attributed to the presence of Nnamdi Azikiwe in the Party, while the GNPP enjoyed its strongest support in the North East of Nigeria. This was also attributed to the fact that, the founder Alhaji Ibrahim Waziri was from the region.

The 1999 election was organised on the back of ethnic interest. And the major beneficiaries were the Yoruba. It was so organised as to placate the Yoruba ethnic group. It would be recalled that in 1993 Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola, a Yoruba, was purportedly elected as the President of Nigeria, but the election that produced him was annulled by then government under General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida's military regime. This later snowballed into political crisis. It was due to the crisis that all the political parties fielded people of Yoruba extraction as their Presidential candidates in 1999 general election. It was not done as a plan to win the election rather it was in a bid to placate the Yoruba. That was purely an ethnic influenced political decision on the part of the politicians and their political parties.

At the time, Alliance for Democracy was purely a Yoruba party, with all the attributes of Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Action Group and Unity Party of Nigeria. Those who championed the party were also Awolowo's political Students. As expected, the party won all the available contested political seats within the Yoruba land. It was just a repeat of the 1979 general election, where the UPN won all the contested seats in the region. But like its predecessors, the party finished at the third position. It was just



a repeat of the old electoral results. The party ended up in the opposition at the national Parliament.

The All Peoples Party, with the apostles of Zik and also that of Ibrahim Waziri won election in most parts of the North West and North East, but then the supposed remnant of the Zik group scattered and melted into other parties, mainly the Peoples Democratic Party. The problem of the APP was simply that it lacks any natural structure to build on, unlike the Alliance for Democracy, as well as the NPN. Though, the party came second in terms of states and number of Parliamentary Seats won both in the federal states Assemblies and in the National Parliament.

Then in 1999, that is 20 years after, the Peoples Democratic Party which was dominated by remnants of the old National Party of Nigeria won the election, just like in 1979. It was not a victory by chance, because all the principal actors in the NPN of 1979 were also members of PDP at the formation. The former Vice President in the NPN government of 1979, Dr Alex Ekwueme was the arrow head in the formation of the party, as well as many former members of the old NPN. It would be assumed that the presence of Alex Ekwueme in PDP was what eclipsed the old NPP of Zik within the Igbo land.

## Chapter 5

### **Research Design and Operationalisation of Variables**

In order to analyse the facts derived in the course of this study and as presented here, one need to develop an appropriate research design. And that is a research design capable of providing a comprehensive medium that could be used to establish the internal differences between the three major ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. This will be in a bid to establish relational or connectivity of the differences and the political mindset each ethnic nation harbours against the other, and how the differences have impacted on the people and democracy in Nigeria. This is also to see how the three ethnic Nations under focus regard each other during democratic elections in the country.

However, due to the fact that, the three ethnic nationalities are highly populated, and dispersed in steep and variegated ways, and in order to derive a standard result, a comprehensive and representative data is evolved to research the findings generated from the research field. In this vein, three Towns one each from the three ethnic nations is selected to serve as a Case Study area.

#### **5.1 Research Design.**

The effect of ethno political mindset as it concerns the democratic transition in Nigeria has generated series of academic reviews (Diamond 1997, Chazan 1993, Zartman 1997, Agbaje 2004, Ihonvbere 1997). These exhibited mindsets were measured through a qualitative research design drawn to fit the environment of the case study in Nigeria. Seven Focus-Group Interviews were carried out during the Field Work for this Thesis in Nigeria. Three of the interviews were carried out at three different Universities in Nigeria. The first Focus-Group Interview was carried out at the University of Lagos (UNILAG), located in the western part of Nigeria. The second Focus-group interview was carried out at the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), located in Zaria and the first University in the Northern Nigeria. The Third Focus-Group was carried out at the University of Nigeria (UNN), located in Nsukka, and the first University in Eastern Nigeria.

The participants were selected within the University environment, particularly those that took part in the focus-group discussions. However, no prior notice was given to the participants before the interviews. Their cooperation was solicited for, and they wholeheartedly accepted to participate. However, the experts were beforehand informed by this Author through formal contact and conversation ensued as to the nature of this Thesis and the issues they contribute in discussing. In any case, the focus group interview questions were open ended ones, and the participants were free to express their feelings as regards the political situation in the country.

The Case study was conducted at the Universities based on the social and political affiliations which the University environment is endowed with. Besides, Nigerians of all ethnic backgrounds and social orientations are very much present at the Universities. The choice of these three areas as case study locations was a result of the points enunciated above and a result of historical development associated with these Towns. The Towns provided tremendous opportunity to carry out an ethnographical study. It provides as well an environment endowed with natural setting to the research problems, which makes it possible to have an analysis of the people's political orientation, based on their ethnic cleavages.

The case studies were conducted through the use of theoretical sampling (Glaser; Strauss, 1998), Bryant and Charmaz (2007) based on Grounded Theory. The use of Grounded Theory is to make the Study remain focus with data collected in the field, though not without minding the possible emergence of new issues in the political environment. Under Grounded Theory data collection and the analysis of same is design to go simultaneously as each factor informs and streamlines the other (Bryant and Charmaz 2007: p1). The use of Grounded Theory is to help also build empirical checks into the analytic process as well as to examine all the theoretical explanations of the empirical findings. The Three case studies gave us a comprehensive knowledge about the fundamental issues responsible for the political reading of Nigerians with regard to ethnic mindset, how it affects democracy in the country and performance of democratic politics in her multi-ethnic environment since 1999.

#### 5.1.1. **Operationalisation of the Variables.**

There are two categories of variables. Each of the variables is indirectly connected to the other, but both Variables directly influence each other. There are *Independent Variables* and there are also *Dependent Variables*.

(i): The *Independent Variable* consists of four sub-variables. These are the ethnic groups, as the main Variable, the Academics, the politicians, and the traders. The political relationship that existed among the three ethnic nationalities under focus was reviewed and the human elements within the three societies were compared as well. Some Academics within these three ethnic societies contributed immensely to the realisation of this study. This was done by soliciting the opinion of some individuals within this secluded community. Some politicians selected from each of the ethnic groups were interviewed and their individual opinions recorded. This includes among other issues their relationship with politicians and individuals from opposite ethnic groups. The comments of those in the field of business and trade were also deeply scrutinised. This was done to determine the level of relationship between people from the different ethnic nations. As well as to figure out how political amenable they feel towards each other.

(ii): The *Dependent Variable* consists of two sub-variables. These are the political parties, and the Institutions of governance. The human structure of some of the registered political parties in the country is analysed and the relationship between the parties' structures and the general society were measured through responses from individuals. How some of the parties are structured, in terms of membership and area coverage. The issue of Institutions of governance is analysed on the premise of the Institutions response to the various needs and problems of the three ethnic groups under focus.

#### 5.1.1.2. **The Respondents in Comparison.**

Comparing the several participants, who contributed to the realisation of this research work, is the cornerstone on which this Thesis is built upon. Coming from different ethnic backgrounds, as well as having different political orientations, the Nigerian

electorate provides a strong and rich information resource, necessary for this study. The rich information resource is attested to through the submissions made in chapter 1 of this Thesis, where the three ethnic nationalities were comprehensively analysed. The Igbo of the Eastern region, the Yoruba of the Western region, and the Hausa-Fulani in the Northern region provide different characteristic of a society. But for the sake of strict adherence to the scope of this Thesis, the political philosophies of the three ethnic groups are compared and contrasted. This is done by comparing their similarities and their dissimilarities, and how these features are considered and employed by each group. Compared also are reconcilable issues as well as non reconcilable issues between the ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani. Then, the aggregate effect of all the found dichotomies on democracy in Nigeria was objectively studied and analysed. This is derived from individuals across the three studied ethnic societies.

#### **5.1.2. Case Study Areas of Enugu, Abeokuta, and Kano.**

The three areas were chosen for the case studies as a result of the large presence of people from different ethnic groups and regions resident in the areas. The research in these areas enabled us to find out the lines of political conflict in the democratic processes of Nigeria. It allowed us also to know, if democracy has any significant role to play in uniting the various ethnic nationalities. Being a country with multiple ethnic groups where the control of political power by a particular ethnic group and region is often resisted or is perceived as political domination by the other regions. Nigeria is multi-ethnic and so are the people and regions politically, economically, socially, culturally, and religiously different.

The study in these areas enabled this researcher to know, if democracy can help to unite and eliminate these differences, or if the differences defy political solution and also beyond democracy. There is always the claim of political domination by all the ethnic groups and regions in Nigeria, but none of the regions ever accepted dominating others politically. The study in these areas provides an insight to the reasons behind this incessant claim of being politically dominated. More so, to know if this is a by-product of the power and survival theory in a multi-ethnic political environment<sup>1</sup>. Marginalisation has become an essential part of interest in political

discussion on Nigeria. Therefore, the study in these areas provides the chance to find out if the marginalisation theory is a politically motivated tool used by ethnic groups and regions who find themselves outside the corridors of political power to seek political concessions or if the marginalisation outburst is a means of creating political sympathy. Indeed, we believe also that the study in these areas will provide an avenue to look at the participation and involvement of the locals in the democratic development of the rural communities.

Each ethnic group and region within Nigeria claimed the political right to produce the President of the country, particularly between the Hausa-Fulani in Northern section and the two ethnic nations of Igbo, and the Yoruba in the Southern part of the country. The study in these three areas created the opportunity to look at the relevance of democracy in a multi-ethnic and politically diverse Nigeria. We used this study in these areas to look at the dividends of democracy, and examine the peoples view on the supposed political bond between the state and the society, which the "Democratic Politics" epitomises. The study in these areas and regions enabled us to find out the peoples' view on the place of socio-cultural differences in a democratic Nigeria, as well as the place and role of religion in her political policies and politics.

#### **5.1.2.1. The history of Enugu Town in Eastern Region of Nigeria.**

A case study was carried out in Enugu. Enugu state is an inland state in south-eastern Nigeria. Its capital is Enugu town, from which the state, created in 1991 from the old Anambra State derives its name (see Map 5.1 and map 5.2 below). The principal cities in the state are Enugu and Nsukka. The word "Enugu" means "the top of the hill". The first European settlers arrived in the area in 1909, led by a British mining engineer, Kikson. In his quest for silver, he discovered coal in the Udi Ridge. Colonial Governor of Nigeria Frederick Lugard took keen interest in the discovery, and by 1914 the first shipment of coal was made to Britain.

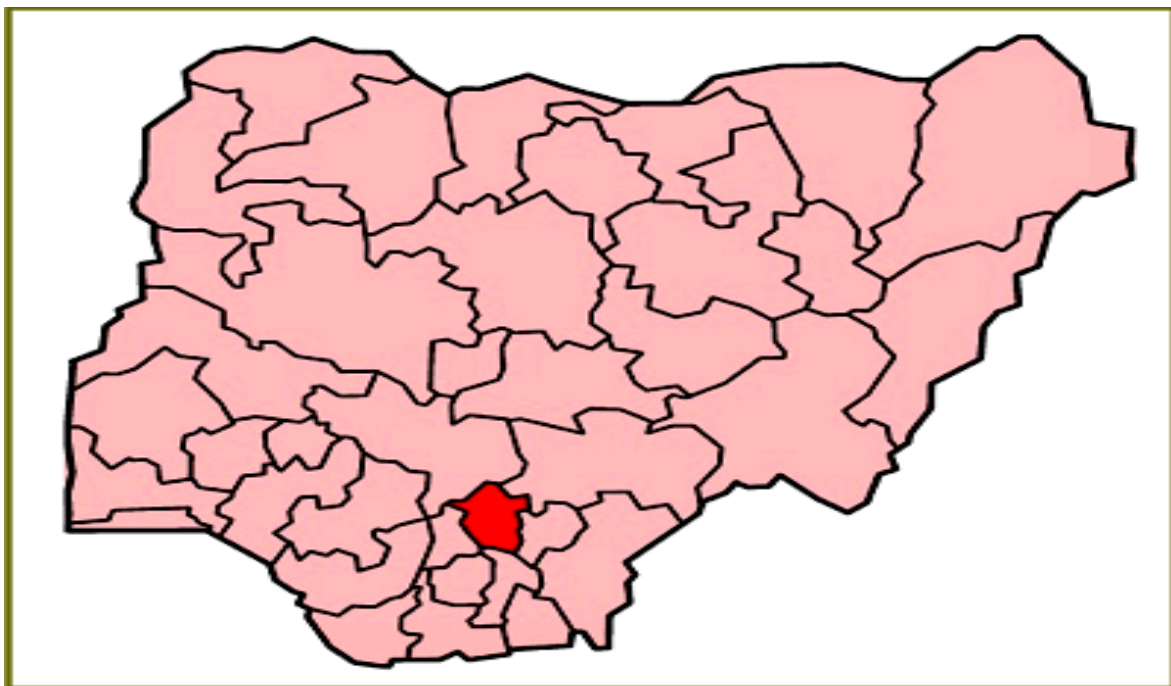
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1. This suggests a situation where every ethnic nationality attempts to outplay other contending forces, by painting its political position in the national government as dismal and pathetic.

As mining activities increased in the area, a permanent cosmopolitan settlement emerged, supported by a railway system. Enugu acquired township status in 1917, and became strategic to British interests. Foreign businesses began to move into Enugu, the most notable of which were John Holt, Kingsway Stores, British Bank of West Africa and United Africa Company.



Map 5.1. Showing the administrative map of Enugu state (Source. [www.speakersoffice.gov.ng](http://www.speakersoffice.gov.ng))



Map 5.2. Showing the sketch map of Enugu state position in Nigeria (Source. [www.speakersoffice.gov.ng](http://www.speakersoffice.gov.ng))

From Enugu, the British administration was able to spread their influence over the Southern Province of Nigeria. The colonial past of Enugu is today evidenced by the Georgian building styles and meandering narrow roads within the residential area originally reserved for the whites, an area which is today called the Government Reserved Area (GRA).

From being the capital of the Eastern Region (now divided into nine States, Anambra, Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa), Enugu became the capital of East Central State, old Anambra State, and now the capital of the present Enugu State through a process of state creation and diffusion of administrative authority by the erstwhile military governments.

The state has common boundary with Abia and Imo States to the South, Ebonyi State to the East, Benue State to the Northeast, Kogi State to the northwest and Anambra State to the West. Though land-locked, Enugu is approximately two and a half hours drive away from Port Harcourt, Calabar and Warri, and other coastal cities with major shipping ports. Enugu is also located within an hour's drive from Onitsha and 2 hours' drive from Aba, two notable trading centres in Nigeria. The city is also located within 5 hours drive from Abuja and 7 hours from Lagos, the administrative and commercial headquarters of Nigeria respectively.



Lying partly within the semi-tropical rain forest belt of the south, the State spreads towards the north through a land area of approximately 8,727.1 square kilometres. Its physical features change gradually from tropical rain forest to open wood-land and then to Savannah. Apart from a chain of low hills, running through Abakaliki, Ebonyi State in the east to Nsukka in the north -west, and southwards through Enugu and Awgu, the rest of the state is made up of low land separated by numerous streams and rivulets, the major ones of which are the Adada River and the Oji River.

It is inhabited by people of Igbo extraction. There are also pockets of people from several ethnic and tribal groups in Nigeria. These other minority groups, who are equally resident in the town, are the Ijaws, Efik, and the Ibibio's. Also resident in the town are people from Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani ethnic nationalities.

(i). **Political Climate:**

The political climate in Enugu is usually that of a charged environment. In every election period, the city, like every other city or Village in the entire Igboland is usually boisterous with political activities. Everyone in the City is always passionate about elections and particularly about contending candidates. In essence, every qualified elector is a political activist. Though, there is no reliable data to relate the real electoral strength of the parties in the town of Enugu, but the result on the ground at the moment proved a one party state, as the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) controls absolutely both the executive and the legislative arms of the government since the 1999 return to democratic politics in the country. Other political parties existed only in names as none has been able to win any contested seat or defeat the ruling party. The opposition parties are heard only during elections and after elections their presence fades away. A testimony to the electoral situation in Enugu state as derived from the April 2011 general election is presented below.

Party Scores in the April 2011 General Election in Enugu State.
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Party	Governorship	Senate	House of Reps	State Assembly
APGA	0	0	0	0
PDP	1	3	8	24
ACN	0	0	0	0
CPC	0	0	0	0
ANPP	0	0	0	0
Labour	0	0	0	0
PPA	0	0	0	0
PDC	0	0	0	0
ADC	0	0	0	0

Table 5.1. Showing the April 2011 election result in Enugu State (Source, adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org))

With the above presented election result, it is very clear that only one political party controls every available elective position in the state. But this election outcome does not mean that the party is doing wonderfully well in providing the populace with dividends of democracy. It is just that the ruling party is richer both in financial terms and also in personalities.

(ii).

**Class.**

In Enugu, there are people from various ethnic and tribal groups with different social backgrounds. The politics of the city reflects also what is obtainable in every other part of Igboland. However, the presence of people from other ethnic nations is never politically felt, and so their presence is usually politically insignificant. This is not also just an issue of politics alone. In the trade and commerce, it is entirely dominated by people of Igbo extraction. There is hardly any presence of individuals from other tribal groups or nationalities. The Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani people do not engage in any serious trade capable of challenging the absolute domination of it by the Igbo. This is not based on the premise that the other ethnic nations cannot prosper in trade and commerce, but because they are not there in significant number to register their presence. Even the few of them, who are there, do not trade or have any competent knowledge of commerce that could challenge the domination of the sector by the

people of Igbo extraction. Non Igbo people in Enugu town are mostly those in “Pay Jobs”, such like people working in the federal government agencies and establishments located in the town.

It was almost like a trend, every individual of Igbo extraction who contributed in the making of this study talked about the political situation of the Igbo people in Nigeria. At every point of discussion, there must be a lamentation like complaint about the state of the country, and especially about the relationship between other tribal or ethnic nations and the Igbo people, with regard to political opportunity at the national level. So, the Igbo who inhabit the town of Enugu are used in representative form to represent all Igbo people as one hardly differentiate the people based on their towns or federal states. Every individual of Igbo extraction in Enugu identifies himself or herself simply as an Igbo. Every Igbo voiced his political opinion, which in every sense reflects what most people of Igbo extraction have in mind politically about the national politics in Nigeria.

Political activism in Enugu is only for the people of Igbo extraction. People from other ethnic or tribal groups do not have any role in the political scene not only in the Town of Enugu, but also in every town or village in the Igboland. It is however difficult in many instances to differentiate between who is a politician and who is not a politician among the Igbo people. Everybody has the same political opinion about the state of the Igbo people in Nigeria. Each individual Igbo man or woman shares the same cultural ideology, and ethnic solidarity that support the argument the Igbo people are not culturally connected to other tribal groups within the Nigerian state.

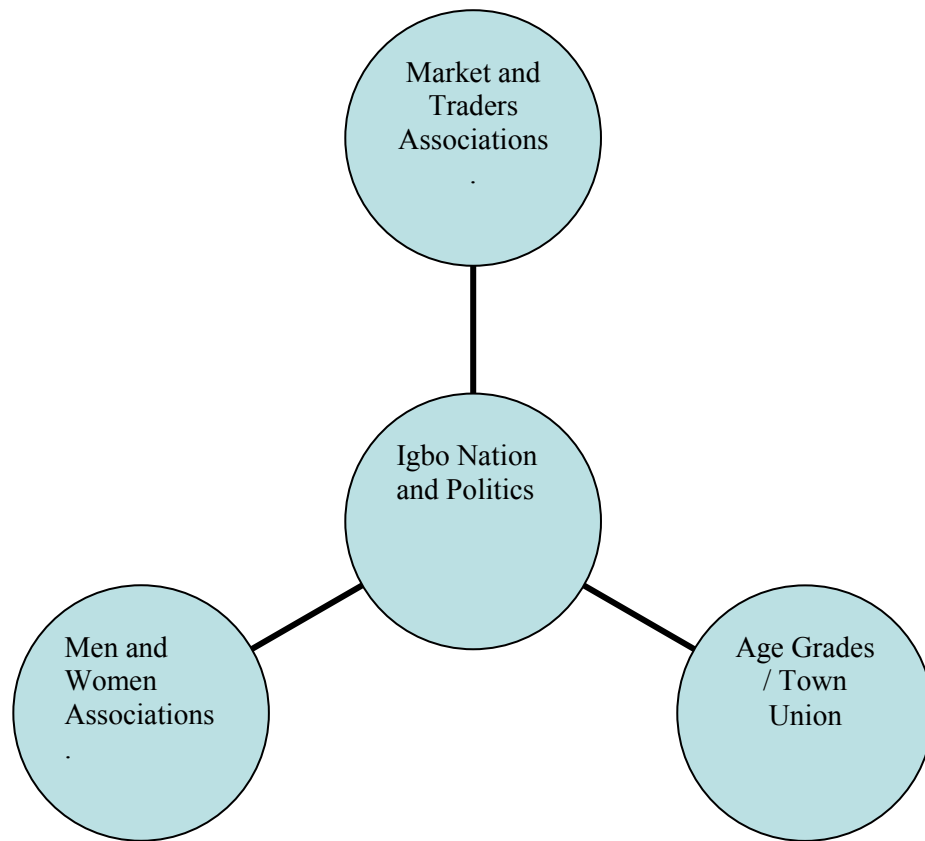


Figure. 5. 1. Showing how political decision among the Igbo in Enugu generated (Source Okoro 2011).

The political scene of Enugu, like in every other Town or Village within igboland is controlled by many factors. There are different Women Associations in the town of Enugu, as well as in other towns and Villages in Igbo Land. There are also different Market Associations in Enugu. This consists of but not limited to Enugu Market Traders Association, The Enugu Market Women Association, the different Age Grades, and Youths Organisations. These factors are graphically represented in figure 5.1 above.

The above graphical drawing, presents the various traditional or local institutions that serve as levers to political structures among the Igbo. The Igbo Nation is situated in the middle of the discourse, but there are several branches that are internally connected to the daily functioning of the entire Igbo society. The bodies are not political by establishment and function, but they have huge political influence within

Igboland. Within the associations, political opinions are formulated, and political directions are designed. Then, members are obliged to implement the agreed political agreement, which often emanates from discussions between the associations executives and executives of political parties, as well as between individual politicians and the associations. According to Nwankwo,

“the market association helped them so much in terms of bargaining with the State Government”<sup>2</sup>.

He further claimed that,

“without the political influence and value of the traders association, the politicians would have imposed certain unfavourable economic regulations on them”<sup>3</sup>.

In essence, there is a trade off between the people seeking political offices and traders communities.

(iii). **Issues.**

The Igbo people are found in every part of the country. They are usually in large numbers, and so do have a good representation in the population of every town or village no matter the region in Nigeria. But the people of Igbo extraction never feel secure or free, despite their peace loving nature, and ability to blend within the socio-cultural environment of their host communities. With the fear of persecution and hatred from the other ethnic nations of Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani, especially the later, the people who participated in this study responded in various ways to questions presented to them on the state of political relationship between the Igbo and the two other ethnic nations of Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani. For instance, it is difficult to find an Igbo family, who does not have more than one of her relatives residing in a village, town or city in either the Yorubaland or within one of the villages or towns in Hausa-Fulani Northern Nigeria. The treatment meted out to these people living outside Igboland always charges the political atmosphere at home, and thereby poisons the mind and political thinking of the people, as against

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2. and 3. Alfred Nwankwo trade at the Enugu Ogbete Main Market. He was trying to analyse during the interview the scenario that often play out during elections in Enugu state.

the other ethnic or tribal groups. So, it turns out that, what transpired within other ethnic nations against the Igbo resident there, modify the political standpoint of the people of Igbo extraction within Igboland.

(iv).

#### **Factors.**

The political machinery in the city of Enugu, and as applied in other hitherto Igbo communities are vested in three human structural dimensions. In the organisational structure of the people of Enugu, these structural edifices played an important role in modifying the political spectrum. In a whole, every individual resident of the town belongs to one or two of the 3 dimensions. These three dimensions are, the Market Associations of the Men, as well as the Women, the Age Grades, and the Community Associations.

The Market Association is another interest group within the politics of Enugu state. It is an umbrella body of people who trade in different types of goods and materials, and in different markets or Market locations. Every market location has its own organisational structure and influence. The Traders Union has and wields a very strong political power within the Igbo society. No individual politician can do without the political support of the men and women in the various markets within Enugu, as well as other Igbo towns and villages. During elections, politicians always lobbied the traders for their votes, and this makes the politicians and political parties to feel jittery, as refusal of the Traders Unions to rend their support leaves them unsure of victory or electoral success. According to Umunna,

“most of the politicians and political parties remember them only during election periods. Then as soon as the elections are over and concluded, nobody will see them again”<sup>4</sup>.

Indeed, it is at the markets that one can see the most fanatical Igbo. When asked to name their greatest worry about the state of the Igbo race in Nigerian politics. Some persons in the market vicinity maintained that the refusal of other ethnic groups to accept the fact that the Igbo people are the only group capable of lifting the country, stand out as their greatest worry.

### 5.1.3

### **The Electoral Demography in the Igbo Nation.**

Within the Igbo homeland, the society is tightly connected, just as was explained in Chapter 1 of this study. It is always difficult for anybody to locate the point of divergence amongst the people. Like in every society, be it traditional or non traditional, the behaviour of the people within such society defines who the people actually are. These features may involve the mode of social relationship, authority and the use of power by those given the privilege to do so, and the relationship that may exist between the principals and the subjects.

However, in the Igbo society, Authority and Power evolve from the people and through many channels and it does revolve around several structural bonds. Each of the bonds is democratically structured, though without any rigid political format, just as enunciated in chapter 1 of this study. Because of the republican nature of the Igbo ethnic people, whatever structure or organisational outlook is usually flexible. In that case, it is so easy for any elected individual or power structure to be removed or sacked from office of authority.

### 5.1.4.. **The AMATA and politics among the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria.**

The republican nature of the Igbo people of Nigeria, made it somewhat easier for the people to structure and organise themselves in whatever capacity or opportunity available to them.

One of the many small units of organisational structures within Enugu is the Amalgamation of Markets and Traders Association (AMATA). The organisation serves as the umbrella body of all traders in every market within the town of Enugu, and is also formed in every other big market in other Igbo towns and cities.

The primary political goal of the association is to provide a platform for its members' interest, as well as to participate actively in the political deliberation in the homeland. They provide also leadership and guidelines to the members, on how economic activities should be contracted within the market premises.

(i) **The Political clout of AMATA during elections in Igbo land.**

On the basis of the fact that most Igbo people are business minded, and usually engaged in trades, then the political contribution and support of the trader's umbrella body is very significant for any individual politician or political party that win their endorsement during any democratic election. Indeed, during elections in Igbo land, politicians from the various registered political parties always seek the support of the Association. This is usually done with the belief that the endorsement of the Traders association will go a long way to paint a favourable picture of the party and her contesting candidates.

(ii) **Towns Union and Political direction of Communities in Igbo Land.**

In every town or village within Igboland, there is always a Town Union. It is political in outlook and structure, but communal in its activities. It has elected officials, who coordinate the affairs of the union. It usually wields a strong and powerful political influence within each Village. It serves as a form of communal government. Its membership is open to every biological indigene of the village or town as the case may be. The system of communal governance is explicitly discussed in chapter 1 and in chapter 3 of this thesis.

(iii). **Age Grades.**

In every village or town within Igboland, the men usually group or organise themselves under the auspices of Age Grade. These are young men from different households in a village, Settlement or town in Igboland. The Age Grade is a very strong communal grouping of young people for the purpose of communal policing, enforcement of communal decision as well as initiating and undertaking developmental projects within the community. It is not a political association, but a traditional organisation created for self help purposes. The evolution of the Age grade in Igbo society is well highlighted in chapter 1 of this Thesis.

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4. Chijioke Umunna trades in Electrical accessories at the Main Market Enugu. He berated the behaviour of the politicians, pointing that the politicians are only interested in their individual concerns and not that of the ordinary people like himself on the street.



(iv).

### **Women Associations.**

In Igbo society, the women folk and the role of women are highly respected. Though, every woman sticks to the traditional structure and values attached to family. In Enugu, there are several Associations of Women. They derive their membership from churches, town unions, and various markets. They complement the effort of the men in Igbo society.

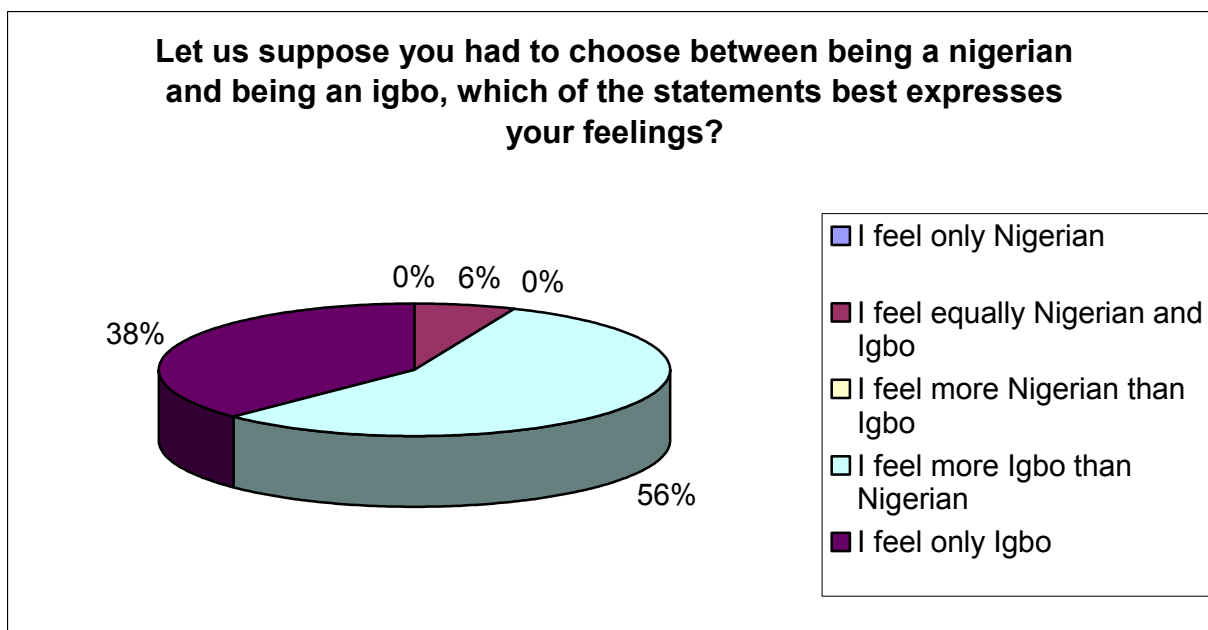
#### **5.1.5. Ethnic influenced mindset of the Igbo and democratic politics in Nigeria.**

Individual needs as well as Group needs combine always in determining how issues in an environment are perceived. The national political perception of the Igbo is generally based on group survival or politics shaped by the needs of the ethnic nation. In any political discussion around any political issue in Igbo land, the same responses are always recorded from whoever is responding. It cuts across gender and Age, and position in the society. See Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2 below depicting the response of the interviewed respondents in Enugu.

If you have to choose between being a Nigerian, and being an Igbo, which of the following Statements best expresses your feeling? Questionnaire question.

Questionnaire Interview in Enugu and the number of Respondents: 64.	
I feel Only Nigerian	0
I feel Equally Nigerian and Igbo	4
I feel More Nigerian than Igbo	0
I feel more Igbo than Nigerian	36
I feel only Igbo	24

Table 5.2. Showing respondents answers in Enugu to question on their identities (Source, adapted from Afro-barometer 2003, with modification).



**Figure 5.2. Showed opinion expressed by contributors through Questionnaire questions in Enugu about their identities in Nigeria (Source Okoro 2011, adapted from Afro-barometer 2003).**

From the above Graph, it would be deduced that the general feeling as expressed in this study by people of Igbo extraction is hinged on the common belief that, they share common identity. That about 94 percent of the respondents to this research study agreed that they are Igbo first before being identified as Nigerians provide a strong insight to the many serious problems confronting the state of Nigeria. Many regard their presence in the geographical structure of Nigeria as a human construct, and not a situation that cannot be corrected. However, just 6 percent of the individuals interviewed accepted the idea that they are both Igbo and Nigerians. Invariably it proves right those ideas and assertions that there is a strong ethnic mindset on the ethnic composition of Nigeria. Accordingly, Diamond (1997) pointed out ethnicity as one of the teething problems confronting democracy in the country. In the same vein Ezeani asserted also that,

“the ethnic feeling of the Igbo and indeed other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria is due to the singular fact that, every individual in Nigeria feels deeply and internally connected to his native Village as well as his Language identity”<sup>5</sup>.

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5. Emmanuel O Ezeani is a professor of Political Science and a senior lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The Igbo as a people and as a Nation of one people define their traditional, as well as their political philosophy as democratic and representative. This is irrespective of the village, town or organisation. In significant numbers, political decisions are usually through collective agreement. Everyone is giving a medium to contribute his or her idea, with regard to issues of general effect. Then, in every election on national political offices, individual preferences and political sympathies are substituted with group political philosophy. Within the Igbo Society, political discussions are usually deliberated within social organisations. These associations as mentioned in the previous discussion could be in the form of market men and women, or traders Associations. It is so obvious to notice the political mood of the people around you, whenever a national political discourse is raised. Looking at the aggregate number of people of electoral age, who voiced their opinion during this research work, it would be understood that the responses provided details of the inner political mind of the greater majority of the people in the region.

But still, the political lock-jam is most obvious, when an election concerns the chance or opportunity to occupy the Presidential office in Nigeria. This is the major reason; politics are played differently at both regional, federal states and local councils.

The people of the Igbo stock do not mind, who wins a local election or state election. This is so because the people know everything about the contesting individuals. This is unlike an election that pitched an Igbo with an individual who hails from another ethnic region of either Yoruba or of the Hausa-Fulani stock.

The people are more at ease with political development and electioneering under-currents at the home-fronts, than say, elections and political development outside the home fronts. The ability and capacity to absolve whatever political differences between two contending individuals from the home fronts are usually easily amended than when it concerns individuals from outside the homeland. Like Ezeoba bemoaned that,

“an average individual Nigerian of Igbo extraction regards himself as endangered species in the Nigerian political scene”<sup>6</sup>.

And according to Senator Okposo, what the various ethnic nationalities want differs. In his words,

“what the Igbo want is not what the people of Hausa-Fulani extraction want, and what the people of Yoruba extraction want is not what the people of Hausa-Fulani and people of Igbo extraction want”<sup>7</sup>

For instance, at the federal level, the Igbo want somebody of Igbo extraction to be the President of the country. Many speakers of Igbo origin believe that unless an Igbo becomes President, then the issue of the civil War remains unresolved.

Another discovered area of concern was the fact that despite the differences noticed in the political preferences of the people, there is a high level of ethnic influenced political actions exhibited by the various ethnic groups against people of other nations in the country. Even though most of the respondents do not have any reliable information about the antecedents of a contesting candidate or the individual previous services to the country, there is every chance that there will be disapproval of the person, in as much as the person in question hails from another ethnic nation and probably shares a different cultural trait.

But then, the ironical aspect of the whole setting proves that such hate is not based on just a single individual. The hatred is usually heaped on the entire ethnic nation. An individual is not hated because he or she is a bad person, but an individual is hated because of the ethnic community he identifies with. The Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3 below illustrate the responses of the contributors to this question during the field study of this thesis.

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6. Mathias Ezeoba is a professor of Political Science and a lecturer at the University of Zurich Switzerland.

7. Senator Okposo was a former federal Senator representing Delta South. He was speaking during an interview with Daily Sun Newspaper ([www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com)).

You voted a candidate during the April 2011 Presidential election because of the followings. Questionnaire questions.

No of Respondents: 64	
Ethnic Identity	61
Religion	18
Qualification of the candidate	20
Party Programme	22
Regional Affiliation with candidate	46

Table 5.3. Showing the respondents reason(s) for voting in 2011 Presidential election (Source, adapted from Afro-barometer with modification).

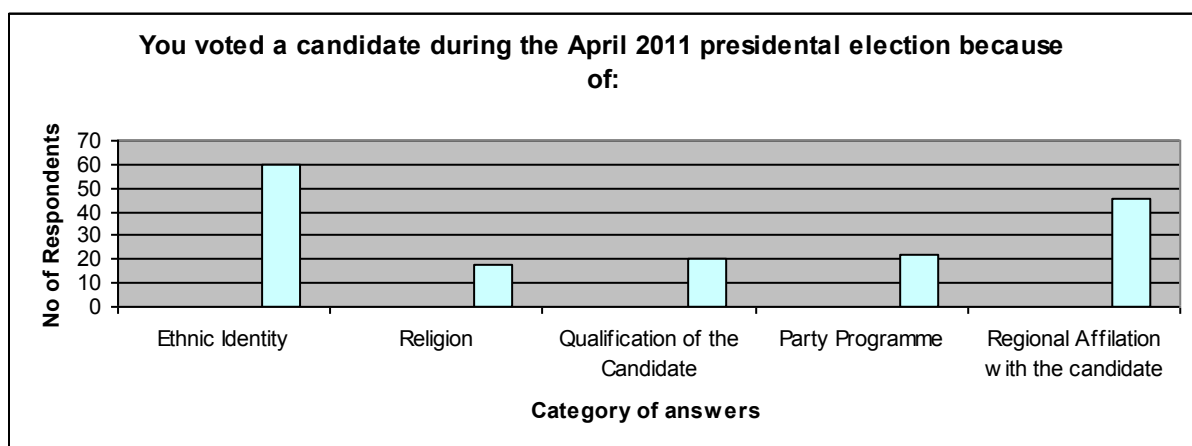


Figure: 5.3. Depict the responses of contributors in Enugu on the 2011 election in Nigeria (Source, Okoro 2011).

Considering the outcome of the above figure 5.3, it will be deduced that the number of Igbo people who contributed to this research study in Enugu believe that the ethnic identity of a contesting politician was paramount to his choice during the 2011

presidential election. Then closely followed was the regional affiliation of the individual contestant. While the party programme of the candidates play no significant role in deciding their votes. Of no importance to the respondents is the issue of religion. The Igbo do not lay much emphasis on the religion or faith that an individual professes, rather what majority considered to be non negotiable is the ethnic identity of a person.

On the local communities and at the federal states, the disapproval of a contesting candidate has no connection to ethnic bias, but purely on the basis of the individuals' ability and capability to provide the community with the basic needs of life. Within the regional or ethnic setting, it is usually the antecedents of an aspiring candidate that endears him to the electorate. But outside the ethnic homeland, it is not the same political requirement that prevails. At the federal level or outside the homelands, so many things usually come into political reckoning. Talk about the natural hate that existed between the various ethnic nations. Talk about the religious identity of each ethnic nation as well as the religious affiliation of the contesting candidates. Talk about the political philosophy of the ethnic group, with regard to political power and the control of machinery of governance in the country. At the federal level, individual antecedents are not scrutinised in some parts of the country, and is never of any paramount importance to the people of the area, rather it is the party that the people are made to vote. Then, whoever occupies the office is not the business of the people. But at the home front, an individual family and background are known even to the local farmer in the village. The previous generation of the aspiring candidate family is known to everybody in the community. Within the ethnic homeland political contest for an elective position is usually that of battle between two or more known quantities.

The approval or disapproval of a candidate has much to do with the family background, as well as the antecedent of the individual in question. The more reliable, trustworthy, and openness the family of an individual is, the more chances that the individual would be accepted within the political arena. If an individual belongs to a notorious family, then that is already the beginning of an end to the individuals' political adventure. It is a make belief within the Igbo ethnic community that an individual cannot be in every way different from the past generations of his family.

The grievances or animosity towards an individual politician in the homeland may range from his position or the position of the parents during a certain Land dispute in the Village, his preference and support during a struggle for the stool of the Village local Chief, his assistance or lack of assistance to the youths in his community. Above all the generosity of such an individual to the people within his community is usually counted as a plus.

All these characteristics make political adventure within the Igbo land an interesting one. Then what the individual stands to promise his electoral constituency remains a story for another day. It is so, because of the fact that most of the politicians do not have any detailed programme they intend to execute if voted into Office during the election. The acceptability or disapproval of a contesting candidate in a political contest usually emanates from the above mentioned features.

Most of the Igbo who participated in the interviews, believed that they know everything an electorate should know about his representative in a political set up. But this same group of respondents equally claimed that; they do not have the same level of Information about a candidate, who hails from another ethnic homeland. However, because of the deep trust reposed on the aspiring candidate by the people within his electoral constituency, such individual ends up carrying with him the interest of his local community, and that of his ethnic homeland to the national level. No Igbo federal Lawmaker goes to the national Assembly to protect the national interest above ethnic interest. This argument was more elaborated by a newly elected federal Lawmaker from Enugu state. He was elected on the platform of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the April 2011 general election to represent one of the federal constituencies in the state. He said during an interview that,

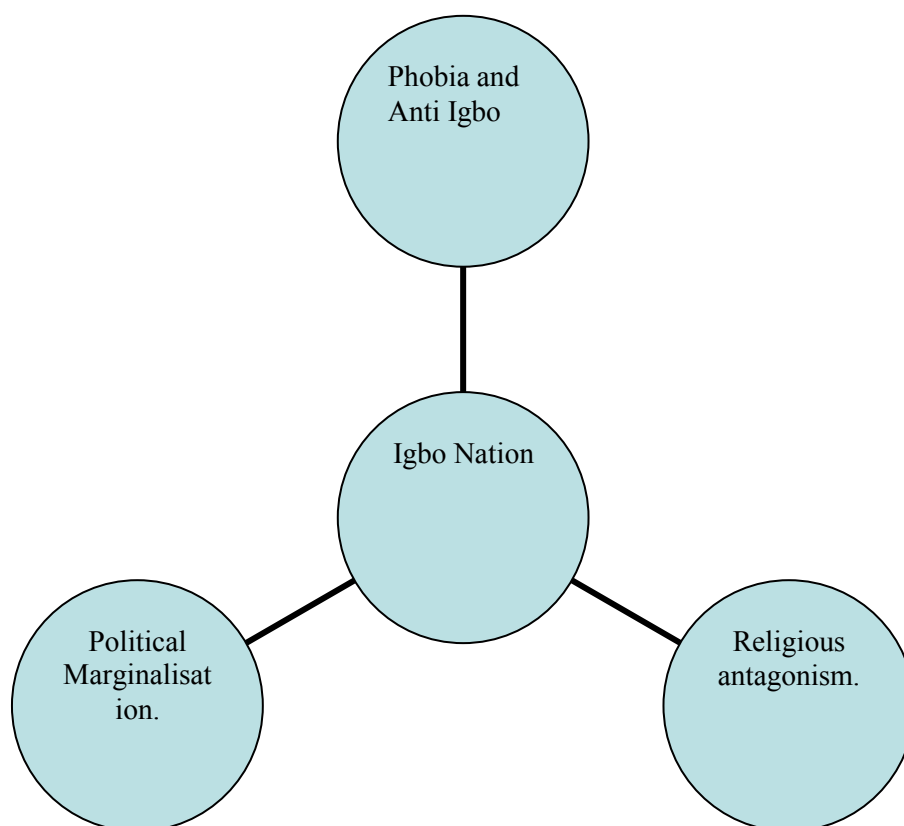
“the interest of those people who sent me to the federal Parliament is what shapes my voting direction during debates at the National Assembly”<sup>8</sup>.

He further said that,

“it does not matter to me, if my position of argument tallies with that of people from other ethnic homelands or if it conflict with the interest of any particular section of the country”<sup>9</sup>.

#### 5.1.6. The Political reference point of the Igbo and politics in Nigeria.

The peoples reaction to the political situation in Nigeria; are usually based on several factors. In Igboland and among the people of Igbo extraction, three issues stand out as the main focus points for every Man and Woman in the region. The perception of the Igbo people in Nigeria, that they are under undue threat from other ethnic nationalities, made politics in this region to be viewed as a fight for survival. The figure 5.4 below illustrates factors that heightened the fear and apprehension of the Igbo in Nigeria.



**Figure 5.4. The Mindset Dilemma and democratic realism in Nigeria, the Igbo and the rest (Source Okoro 2011)**

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8/9. The lawmaker is elected into the Nigerian House of Representatives as a fresh parliamentarian. He was reacting to the question, if he sees himself more as an Igbo or more as a Nigerian going to the federal parliament



The above graphical presentation depicts the various factors that shape the political thinking and orientation of an average Igbo person. Most of the participants in Enugu, and who are of Igbo extraction believes that the Igbo are rejected and despised by people of other two ethnic nationalities in the country. With this in the minds of the people, it becomes difficult to convince anybody that there is a need for the continued existence of the country that is meant to protect all.

Due to lack of faith in the security agents of the state, it is the overwhelming conviction of majority of those respondents who contributed their views during the field research study, that the Anti-Igbo exhibited by the Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani peoples cannot abate or disappear.

A substantial number of respondents argued also that the Phobia against the Igbo was purely out of envy for the success of people of Igbo extraction in every aspect of endeavour. The simple belief, that the ethnic nations of Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani are against the political relevance of the Igbo, unites the Igbo, and makes them to react always in unison in approving or disapproving any policy they deemed unfavourable to them.

Many retorted that they make their voting decisions on the strength that, Igbo are hated by the Yoruba, as well as the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria. A local community councillor in Enugu town argued that he will always vote for any candidate that is of Igbo extraction during national elections, even if such individual did not eventually win the election; and even if the individual is not a member of his own political Party. He hinged his argument on the fact that, a non Igbo cannot represent him effectively, and that a non Igbo does not share the same political philosophy and cultural affinity with him. This is an opinion shared by many Igbo here in Enugu. Many argued that no matter how well a Yoruba or a Hausa-Fulani person speaks about an Igbo in the public, such speech does not in any way translate to acceptance. Because, internally they will conspire to deprive an Igbo what duly should be his entitlement.

So, the general consensus among the people of Igbo extraction who contributed to this research study is that the Igbo Nation is being politically marginalised by the rest of the country. Some claimed that, since after the 1967-1970 Nigeria-Biafra Civil War

nobody of Igbo extraction ever ruled the country. Then, there are others who maintained that, nobody of Igbo extraction ever served as the Chief of the Nigerian Army. There are also a number of respondents, who claimed that, people of Igbo extraction are not allowed to head certain Ministerial positions. But all these arguments are not without elements of truth in them. The only time an Army Officer of Igbo extraction headed the Nigerian Army after the Civil War of 1967-1970 was August 2010, in the person of Azubuike Ihejirika, a General in the Nigerian Army. Another aspect of event that makes the Igbo to feel unsafe and unwanted in Nigeria is the issue of religious tolerance. The Igbo are being always attacked in the Northern part of the country. Crises are initiated even if the issue in contention has nothing to do with any Igbo person. For the mere fact that Igbo are Christians, they are usually targeted by the Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the Northern region of Nigeria. Their properties destroyed, and many of them rendered homeless.

How often does any of this lead to violent conflict against the Igbo?	
A. Political crisis leads to violent ethnic attacks against the Igbo	3
B. Political rivalry between parties lead to violent attacks against the Igbo	1
C. Ethnic bias leads to religious attacks against the Igbo	58

Table 5.4. Showing the number of respondents in Enugu according to choice (Source adapted from Afro-barometer 2003 with modification).

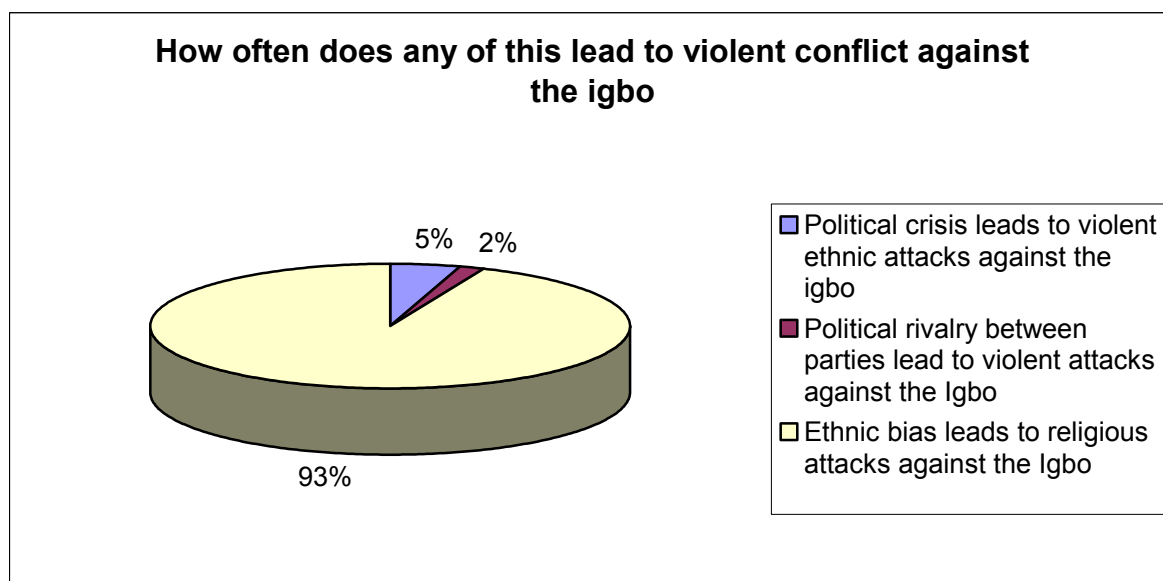


Figure 5.5. Showing responses of Respondents on religious attacks against the Igbo (Source Okoro 2011).

As many as 93 percent of the people who responded to this question agreed that, the incessant religious oriented attacks on the Igbo in the Northern part of the country were purely based on ethnic bias. Whereby Churches, properties and business premises belonging to people of Igbo extraction are burnt, and destroyed. Many reasoned that, with such hate against the Igbo, it has become very difficult for them to trust anybody of non Igbo extraction. Many maintained that, they will continue to vote for an Igbo person during elections, even if such individual failed to win at the end. In the same regard, Amaeze Ugwu, a high ranking official of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Enugu maintained that;

“since after the civil War, the Igbo never for once trusted any Yoruba person politically. This is so because the Igbo do not believe in any political promises made by any Yoruba person”<sup>10</sup>.

He based his argument on the role of the Yoruba during the civil War and the after the Civil War in 1970. This is so, because the Igbo regard the Yoruba person as a collaborator and an unreliable person. There is little or no adequate means for Information transmission and dissemination to the larger part of the population about office seeking individuals in the country, apart from those contenders hailed from the various ethnic regions. Another aspect of concern to the Igbo is the issue of political marginalisation by the other ethnic nations in Nigeria. Indeed, the very belief that an Igbo is different from every other person of another ethnic nation in Nigeria makes such an individual to view himself differently.

#### **5.1.7 Voting Pattern of the Igbo.**

The Voting pattern as expressed by the respondents in Enugu provided a non stable pattern. As expressed by majority of the people, what is most important in the voting decision of the electorate is the individual Candidate contesting for an elective office. The moment a credible contesting candidate is presented or nominated by a registered political party, then the electorate will think less of the political platform of such contesting candidate. (See Table 5.5 below)

What shapes your mind each time you go to cast your vote during elections? Resp: 72
---

	Partly	Very Strongly	Never
Your Religion and the religion of the candidate?	10	8	54
Your Ethnicity and Cultural Affinity with the candidate?	14	50	8
Your Regional Identity and that of the candidate?	15	55	2
The Candidate Party Manifesto?	5	12	55
Quality and Qualification of the candidate?	21	6	45
Your Economic Situation?	10	15	47

Table 5.5 tabulation of responses to a questionnaire question in Enugu (Source, Okoro 2011)

A contesting Candidate decides the voting pattern of the people. In the absence of a credible and acceptable candidate, then the electorates are usually forced to look to the direction of the political parties and sometimes through the personalities in the parties. Like one Health Worker explained,

“the electorates are usually made to look and compare candidates from all the contesting political parties<sup>11</sup>.

This implies also that most of the electorate’s ability to scrutinise the parties and candidates, only come to play, when a favoured political party nominates an unpopular individual as a Candidate. This happens especially among the rural people and many of those in trade and commerce in the various markets in Enugu. But then, like earlier said, apart from scholars and they are those we described as experts, most other individuals do not know much about the programmes of the political parties they are supporting, rather most of the electorate depends largely on the individuals within the parties echelon.

No of Respondents by Profession: 72	
Scholars in 5 Universities	9
Politicians	14
Businessmen and Business women	16
Students	33

Table 5.6. Showing the number respondents in Enugu according to profession (Source, Okoro 2011)

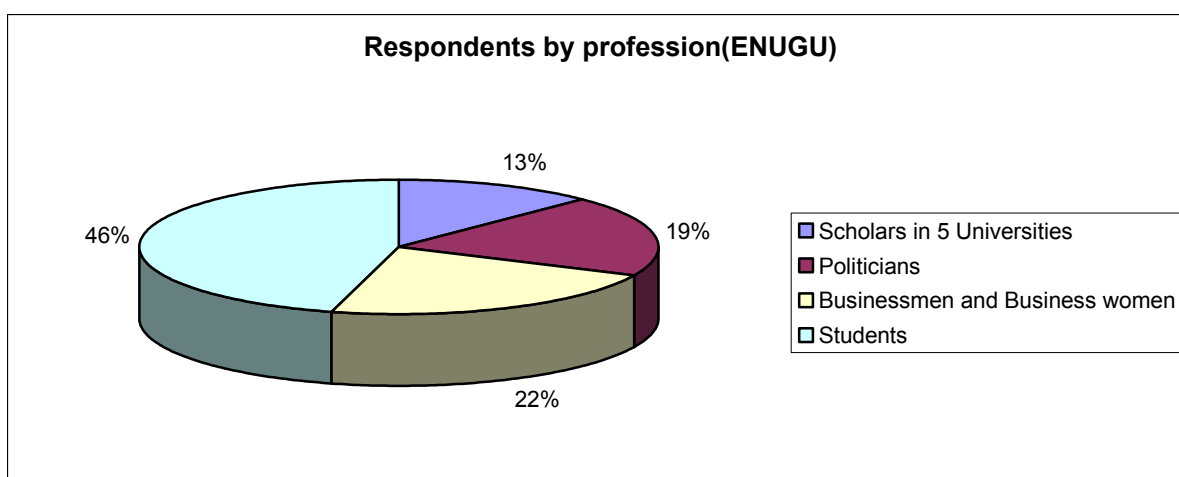


Figure. 5.6. The graphical distribution of respondents in Enugu by profession (Source, Okoro 2011).

About 70 percent of the respondents that participated in the interview in Enugu do not have much information or say any tangible knowledge about the programmes of the contending political parties for the April 2011 general election. Interestingly, all the students interviewed have explicit knowledge about the personalities in the contesting political parties. The Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6 above illustrate the percentage of the respondents in Enugu according to their profession.

Looking at the profession of the participants, it will be discovered that those in the academic community make up 68 percent of the total respondents in Enugu. The scholars drawn from 5 different Universities within and around Enugu belong also to different disciplines. Considering their constituency, one would be of the mind that there will be no element of ethnic colouration in their opinions. But their individual submissions proved the opposite. In terms of political balancing in Nigeria, there is no difference in political opinion between that Igbo person, who sells goods at the famous Ogbete Main Market in Enugu, and that Student or Professor at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology, or that Staff at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus.

Each person of Igbo extraction interviewed or polled for this Study presented the same information, opinion and political defence in chastising the political dealings in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents in Enugu talked about the insecurity of Igbo people in other regions in Nigeria (see figure 5.6 above). As shown in figure 5.5 through the respondent responses; there is unanimous opinion among Igbo people

who contributed in the discussion that they are not respected, or treated as Nigerians by other ethnic nationalities. A significant number of people interviewed argued that, the hatred of the Igbo person by the Yoruba people, as well as the Hausa-Fulani politically dominated Northern Nigerian is internally entrenched in them. To support their argument, they maintained that; every child of Yoruba descent or of Hausa-Fulani descent believe that the Igbo people are from a different country.

The politicians who contributed to the research study in Enugu made up only 19 percent of the total number of respondents in Enugu. Many of them on their individual capacities accepted the fact that the Igbo are seriously marginalised. Some noted that the politics at the national level is so organised that the Igbo person does not have access to certain powerful offices, especially as represented by the ruling party. By contrast, it is discovered that the general political opinion of every Igbo person with regard to Nigerian national politics remains the same. This is so irrespective of the individual's position within the society. Like Igwe lamented while responding to questions about the nature of political scheming at the national level of Nigerian politics and the place of the Igbo. He said that,

“the structure of political understanding in the country placed the Igbo at a disadvantage”<sup>12</sup>.

It is in this light, that it is so difficult to picture the voting preference of the Igbo in the national elections. Unlike other ethnic nationalities of Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani, where given political parties are viewed and regarded as purely traditional regional parties, or party dominated by elements from the region. The egalitarian nature and the democratic tendencies of the Igbo make the idea of a regional party difficult. Moreover, the Igbo are known for having political opinion that is dispersed in variegated ways.

Indeed most politicians in Enugu and of course within the Igbo homeland go into politics for their personal gains. There are also those who go into politics for the common good of their communities, and the Igbo race at large. This is one among the reasons many respondents feel disenchanted about politicians. The feel of

disconnection with the society forced many of them to withdraw their interests from many of the registered political parties present within Enugu.

Total number of Respondents by Ethnicity in Enugu: 74	
People of Igbo Ethnic extraction	72
People of Yoruba extraction	2
People of Hausa/Fulani extraction	0

Table 5.7 showing the number of respondents in Enugu by Ethnicity (Source, Okoro 2011).

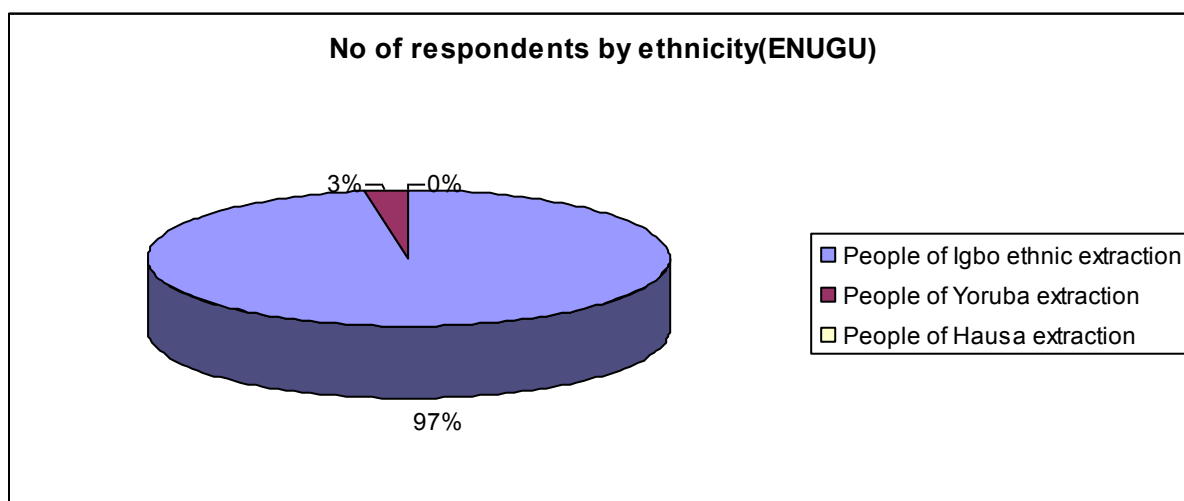


Figure. 5.7. A Graphic Representation of contributors in Enugu by ethnic identity (Source, Okoro 2011)

10. Amaeze Ugwu believes that the political relationship between the Igbo and the Yoruba has become very intractable. He asserted that the basis of their relationship was brutally damaged in 1960s, when Yoruba members of NCNC decamped to Yoruba Action Group led by Obafemi Awolowo.

11. The respondent was of the opinion that personalities in the parties often influence the decision of many electorates during election, other than the party itself.

12. Obasi Igwe is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In his opinion Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani politicians are apprehensive of the Igbo, and are bent on keeping the Igbo away from the presidential office. He supported his argument by saying that the characters from the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani political class have always connived to keep any possible candidate from the Igbo away from among the ruling party favourites.

In the table 5.7 and figure 5.7 above, which displayed the number of participants in this study, as well as their percentages in responses in Enugu, clearly represent an overwhelming agreement in opinion about the state of politics in Nigeria, and especially as it affect the political thinking and calculation of the people of Igbo extraction. The number of people of Igbo origin who contributed to this research study makes up 97 percent of the total respondents in Enugu. Only 3 percent of the respondents are of Yoruba ethnic nation. But then, it is expectedly to be so, because Enugu is located within the Igboland and as such a home for the Igbo.

Total number of Respondents by Gender in Enugu: 74	
Male	53
Female	21

Table 5.8. Showing the number of respondents in Enugu by Gender (Source, Okoro 2011).

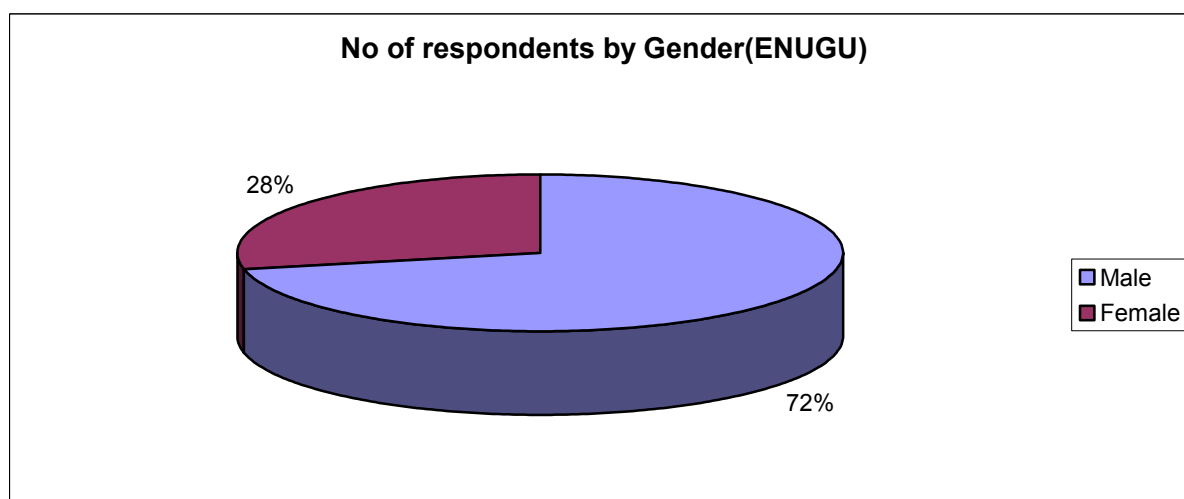


Figure 5.8. A graphic Presentation of Respondents in Enugu by Gender (Source, Okoro 2011).

In trying to figure out the strength of people who contributed to the realisation of this research work. In total, the male make up 72 percent of the total people, who contributed to this P.hD Thesis? While only 28 percent of the respondents are females. The contributors also cut across different age brackets.



Enugu.	
Total number of Respondents by Age in Enugu: 74	
18 – 29	36
30 – 49	23
50 and Above	15

Table 5.9. Showing the percentage of respondents in Enugu by Age (Source, Okoro 2011)

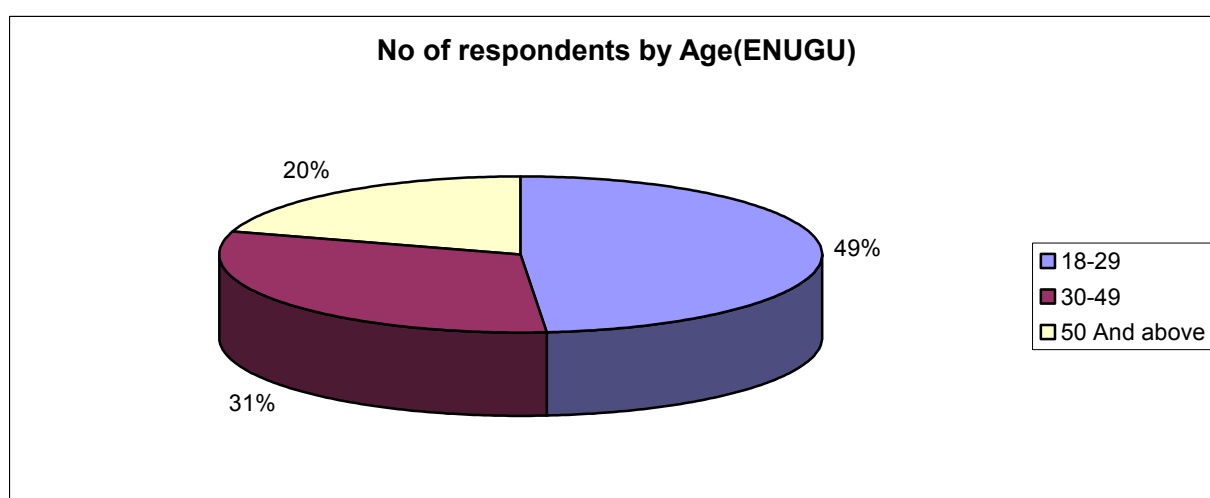


Figure 5.9. A Diagram showing the respondents in Enugu by age (Source, Okoro 2011)

The age of the respondents varies, and they are drawn from different age brackets. The respondents between the ages of 18 to 29 make up 49 percent of the total contributors in Enugu. This is irrespective of the ethnic identity of the respondents.

Looking at the diagram, it will be seen that majority of those who participated in the interviews are young people between the ages of 18-29. They make up 49 percent of the respondents in Enugu and her environ. This is the age range of those born from the year 1980 and above. They are the people born during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. That was at the time Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari served as the President of Nigeria. This covered the period from October 1<sup>st</sup> 1979 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 1983. They also experienced the many Military governments in Nigeria.

## 5.2. Northern Region. The Hausa-Fulani in Kano

The case study was carried out in Kano, which has Millions of Inhabitants, and is the biggest town in Northern Nigeria. Kano City is the Capital of Kano state, and one of the first states to introduce Islamic Sharia Law as a state Law. (See Map 5.2 and map 5.2b below). The Hausa-Fulani dominate the political structure of the Northern region. As enumerated before, the northern region of the country is inhabited by the Hausa-Fulani and other minority ethnic nationalities.



Map 5.3 showing the different communities in Kano state (Source knsgsociatalprogram.com, 1996)



Map 5.3b. Showing the location of Kano in the sketch map of Nigeria (Source, [www.netmarkafrica.org](http://www.netmarkafrica.org))

#### 5.2.1. **Areas.**

In the Northern region of the country, several cities covered provided varieties of Information. The City of Kano is a Hausa-Fulani as well as a Muslim dominated environment. But there is large concentration of people from other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria.

#### 5.2.2. **Class.**

The Respondents cut across every class of people within Kano metropolis, irrespective of ethnicity or social background. The questions were not meant for any particular section of the society.

#### 5.2.3. **Questions.**

To every average individual of the Hausa-Fulani extraction, politics in Nigeria does not signify anything other than power and Authority, as well as control of resources within the Nigerian State. Then any individual that holds the political power in the

country has the authority to undo others within the system. Also on the card, is the idea that the ethnic community such an individual comes from automatically controls the destiny of the country, and thus the life of the entire citizens.

To many within this ethnic group politics is not synonymous with service to one's own Political constituency, but that of control. With the political tension in the country, and precisely the rivalry between the ethnic groups, the average Hausa-Fulani Person believes that, it is normal for an individual from their ethnic group to head the government at the federal level.

#### 5.2.4. **Factors.**

The very serious factors that determine political direction and political decisions are ethnic identity and religion. Every Hausa/Fulani person views himself first as a Hausa-Fulani, then a Muslim, then somebody who comes from Arewa (Northerner), and lastly a Nigerian. Therefore, he sees and regards any individual who comes from another region within Nigeria, as somebody else.

The very factor that defines political direction of the people within Northern Nigeria is the issue of one North. Looking at the diagram below, it displays the symbiotic structure of the Northern region. The one North slogan is deeply affected by religion of the people there. The Hausa-Fulani are Muslims, whereas the Minorities are predominantly Christians and some pockets of animist. The issue of religion separate the upper and lower North of Nigeria.

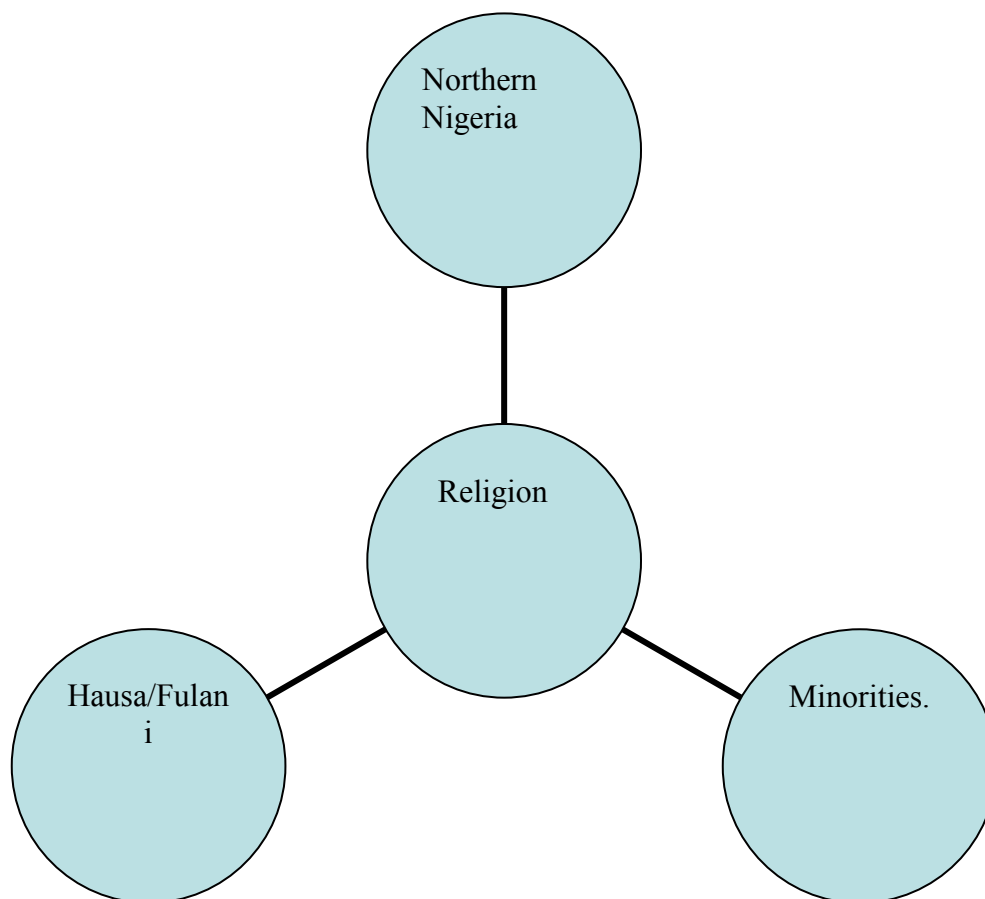


Figure 5.10. A Display of Symbiotic Political Structure in Northern Nigeria (Source, Okoro 2011)

#### **5.2.5. Dilemma of Ethno-political Mindset and Frames within the Hausa-Fulani Community in Northern Region.**

Looking at the political mindset of the Hausa-Fulani against other ethnic nations in Nigeria provides insight to some of the many problems confronting democracy. Not just in Nigeria, but in many developing countries around the World. However, the people of Northern extraction have been ruling Nigeria for the past 37 years out of the 50 Years of Nigeria's Independence.

Nevertheless, the political arrangement left behind by the colonial master Britain in Nigeria created an unbalanced political environment. The political environment after independence favoured the Northern region more than the Southern region of East and West. Their belief that the Igbo and the Yoruba are two distinct peoples different from them has remained part of political nomenclature in the North. This idea of “we and them” has also as a matter of fact enveloped the country at large. This is so, because each tribe has continually regarded each other as a distinct entity.

This is evidently proved by the attribute that each ethnic group accorded the other. There are several frames employed by each group. For instance, every Hausa-Fulani refers to a Yoruba person as “dan yorubawa”, (a Yoruba person) and they describe an Igbo person as “Inyamiri”, (give me Water) Or an Igbo referring someone of Yoruba extraction as, “Onye Ofe nmanu”,(someone who make soup with much oil) or simple as “Onye Yoruba” (a Yoruba person). Or the combined description of a Hausa-Fulani person by either the Igbo person or Yoruba as “Malam” (teacher), Onye ota oji” (someone who eat lots of Kola nut) or simple as “Onye Awusa” (Hausa person).

All these put together go on to tell how much different the researched ethnic groups detest each other culturally. Professor Matto once said that,

“the very fact that each ethnic nation has a Language of her own, natural or inherited traditions, and mode of social relationship; the idea of one Nigeria remains artificial”<sup>13</sup>.

This opinion was further strengthened by another scholar, Dr Saleh Dauda, who submitted that,

“the type of politics played by the Hausa-Fulani led Northern Nigeria is a carry over of the old political order in the North”<sup>14</sup>.

The total of 54 respondents who participated in the study within Kano city, and who are of Hausa-Fulani extraction, agreed that, they are Hausa or Fulani first, then Muslims, and from the Northern part of Nigeria (See table 5.10. and figure 5.12 below)

Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a Nigerian and being a Hausa-Fulani, which of the following statements best expresses your feelings?	
Questionnaire questions targeting only Hausa-Fulani Respondents in kano: No 54.	
I feel only Nigerian	0
I feel equally Nigerian and Hausa-Fulani	10
I feel more Nigerian than Hausa-Fulani	0
I feel more Hausa-Fulani than Nigerian	28
I feel only Hausa-Fulani	16

Table 5.10 showing respondents responses in Kano (Source adapted from Afro-barometer 2003 with modification).

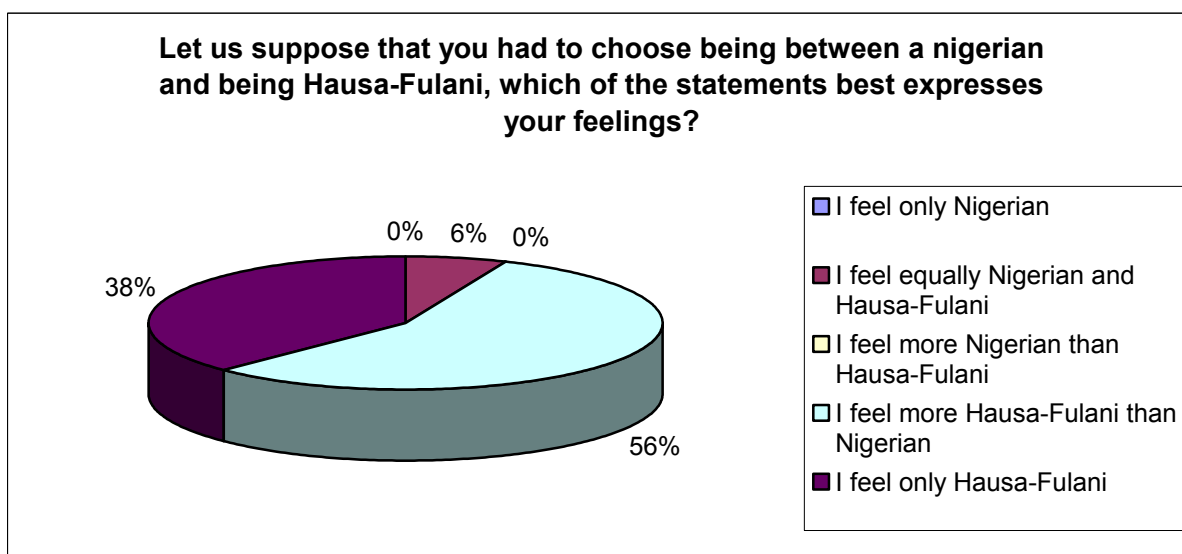


Figure 5.11 showing Hausa-Fulani respondents response in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

From the data contained in figure 5.12 above, it showed that 28 respondents from 54 participants representing 56 percent of the total respondents submitted that they feel more Hausa-Fulani than Nigerian. Another group of respondents consisting 16 respondents representing 38 percent of the total participants agreed that they feel Hausa-Fulani only, while only 10 respondents representing just 6 percent accepted that they feel equally Nigerian as well as Hausa-Fulani. In the data above, none of the respondents agreed to be Nigerian only, or to feel more Nigerian than Hausa-Fulani. Almost all the respondents agreed that they are neither the same with the Igbo, nor are they the same with the Yoruba. And in politics, these differences are

always exhibited by the Hausa-Fulani. One Malam Inuwa Gusau, rightly pointed out that,

“the political discipline established by the pre-independence Northern politicians is what has been serving as a guide to the entire northern political class”<sup>15</sup>.

The Table below depicts the internal political feelings by the Hausa-Fulani people, who participated in this research study in the city of Kano.

You voted a candidate during the April 2011 Presidential election because of the followings. Questionnaire questions for only Hausa-Fulani participants in Kano.

No of Respondents: 54

Ethnic Identity	54
Religion	54
Qualification of the candidate	20
Party Programme	15
Regional Affiliation with candidate	54

Table 5.11 Showing the number of respondents who participated in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

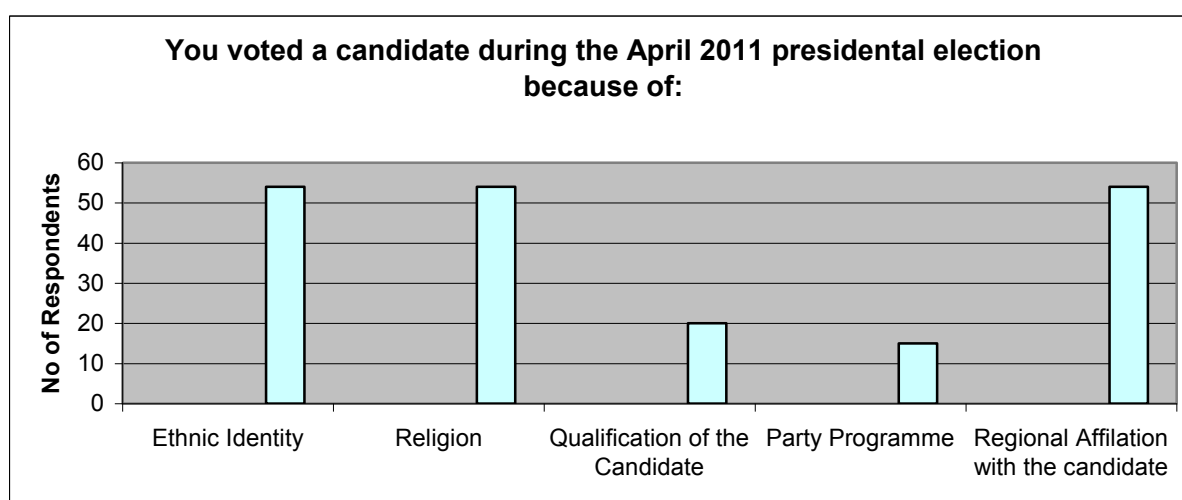


Figure 5.12. A Graphic Displaying reasons for voting in April 2011 by Respondents in Kano (Source, Okoro 2011).



As noted earlier, ethnicity, religion, and regional affiliation were issues that stood atop in the responses of the people interviewed in Kano during the course of this study. On each of the questions, more than 50 percent of the respondents agreed that ethnic identity of an individual candidate, his religious affiliation, and his regional homeland influences their voting direction. Whereas only about 15 percent of the respondents agreed that parties Programme influences their choice of Candidate or party during elections. By implication, it means that an average Hausa-Fulani person considers religion as of utmost importance to him, as well as the ethnicity of a Candidate before deciding on how to cast his ballot.

In a Focus-group interview conducted at the Bayero University Kano, one Student of Public Administration pointed out that, as an individual voter, he does not have any knowledge about virtually all the non Hausa-Fulani candidates, who have been contesting election for the office of the President of Nigeria. He maintained that, the only single information he has about them, is that either one is an Igbo, or a Yoruba, a Christian, or a Muslim. This goes on to point to the idea of ethnicity and religion.

#### 5.2.6 Voting Pattern of the Hausa-Fulani in Kano

Like every other ethnic nationality in Nigeria; the Hausa-Fulani Community always voted in elections through the Personalities presence in the parties. The Party manifesto does not influence many persons of Hausa-Fulani stock. According to the response of contributors in Kano, only a negligible number of people have knowledge about the various manifestos or programmes of action of the political parties in Nigeria. (See Table 5.12 below)

What shapes your mind each time you go to vote during election?	Resp: 54		
Questionnaire Interview only for Hausa-Fulani Participants in Kano.	Partly	Very Strongly	Never
Your Religion and the religion of the candidate?	16	30	8
Your Ethnicity and Cultural Affinity with the candidate?	16	31	7
Your Regional Identity and that of the candidate?	18	30	6
The Candidate Party Manifesto?	3	5	46
Quality and Qualification of the candidate?	18	36	0
Your Economic Situation?	24	30	0

Table 5.12 Showing responses of participants on the voting pattern in Kano (Source. Okoro 2011)

According to responses in Table 5.12, majority of the respondents have no explicit knowledge about the manifesto of the parties contesting election. In the above table, 46 out of 54 participants submitted that they are never influenced by the manifesto of any political party during elections. This implies that the respondents have no knowledge or that they have little knowledge about the manifesto of the parties soliciting for their votes. In the same vein a total of 36 respondents agreed that the quality and qualification of a contesting candidate affect their voting pattern tremendously. The data showed also that a total of 46 respondents who participated in this study agreed that they are partly and very strongly influenced in their voting pattern by the religion and that of the contesting candidate in a national election.

Above all the Personalities in the parties serve as connector between the Hausa-Fulani electorates and the political parties. This political philosophy was first introduced in the 1960s 1<sup>st</sup> Republic through Northern Peoples Congress under the late Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello. Just like in the past, an individual politician can successfully turn the fortune of a political party around in this part of the country. The People do not vote on the strength of a political party nationally, rather the ordinary Hausa-Fulani electorate makes its electoral decision on the basis of a political figure.

Total number of Respondents by Profession in Kano: 54	
Scholars in 1 University	3
Politicians	8
Businessmen and Business women	14
Students	29

Table 5.13. Showing the number of respondents in Kano by Profession (Source, Okoro 2011).

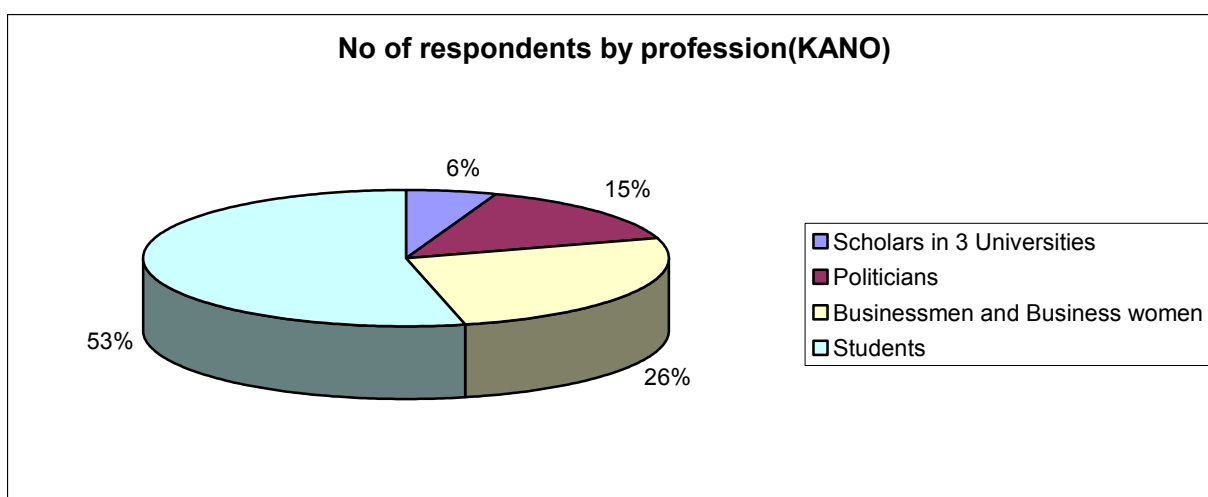


Figure 5.13. Display of Respondents responses in percentage by Profession (Source, Okoro 2011).

The above graph exhibits the distribution of people who participated in the research. Those in the academic communities of Kano, Abuja and Zaria make up 59 percent of the respondents, with Students in various institutions of higher learning, who participated in the study, making up 53 percent, and Staffs of the institutions forming 6 percent of the total respondents in Kano. Then respondents who are in the field of trade and commerce make up 26 percent of the total number of respondent. 15 percent of the total contributors are politicians from different political parties. Participants were drawn from the various fields, so as to be able to elicit valuable opinions from the residents of Kano. The institutions of higher learning, where respondents were drawn from are the Bayero University, University of Abuja, and Ahmadu Bello University Zaria all located within Northern region.

The Politicians as enunciated were drawn from the major political parties in Kano. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). The scholars were drawn from the Institutions listed above. Those in the business community were interviewed at random in Sabon Gari area of the town. In federal state of Kano, the All Nigerian Peoples Party ruled the State for 8 years out of the 12 years of present democratic dispensation in Nigeria. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was the ruling Party from 1999 to 2003. But in the April 2011 general election, the Peoples Democratic Party became the dominant party again, as the party won

not only the governorship election but it won also majority in the state House of Assembly. The table below shows the April 2011 election outcome in Kano state.

	Governorship	Senate	House of Reps	House of Ass
PDP	1	2	11	30
APGA	0	0	0	0
AC	0	0	0	0
ANPP	0	1	8	10
CPC	0	0	2	0
PPA	0	0	0	0
NDP	0	0	0	0
Labour	0	0	0	0

Table 5.14: showing the performance of the registered political parties in the April 2011 general election in Kano state. (Source, adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org), 2011)

The City of Kano has remained a centre for trade and commerce for several years. It harbours large concentration of businessmen and businesswomen from different ethnic background. Despite the seemingly mix of people resident in the town, it does not provide any change of attitude by the Hausa-Fulani toward people from other ethnic nationalities. So many ethnic conflicts have erupted in the past in the City between the Hausa-Fulani and people of other ethnic and tribal origins, especially the Igbo resident in the City. Each of these riots resulted in loss of several lives and property.

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13. Kabir Matto is a Professor of political Science at the University of Abuja. According to him, the question of ethnicity is something that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigerian national life. In his words, in the three ethnic regions different languages are spoken, and different social mentality operates, then non of the languages or social mentalities could be called or qualify as national.

14. Dr. Saleh Dauda is a senior Lecturer at the University of Abuja. He declared that, like other ethnic nationalities of Igbo and Yoruba, the Hausa-Fulani are not in any way different with regard to the type of politics bequeathed to it by the regions leaders at the time of Nigeria's independence.

15. Inuwa Gusau is a school teacher in Sabon Gari Kano. According to him, the kind of politics, the present political class of Hausa-Fulani origin are trying to operate does not correspond to the politics bequeathed to the people of the region by their past leaders, especially Ahmadu Bello, who was the leader of defunct Northern Peoples Congress (NPC).

Total number of Respondents in the Questionnaire interviews by Ethnicity: 54	
People of Igbo Ethnic extraction	15
People of Yoruba extraction	8
People of Hausa/Fulani extraction	31

Table 5.15. Showing the number of participants by Ethnicity in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

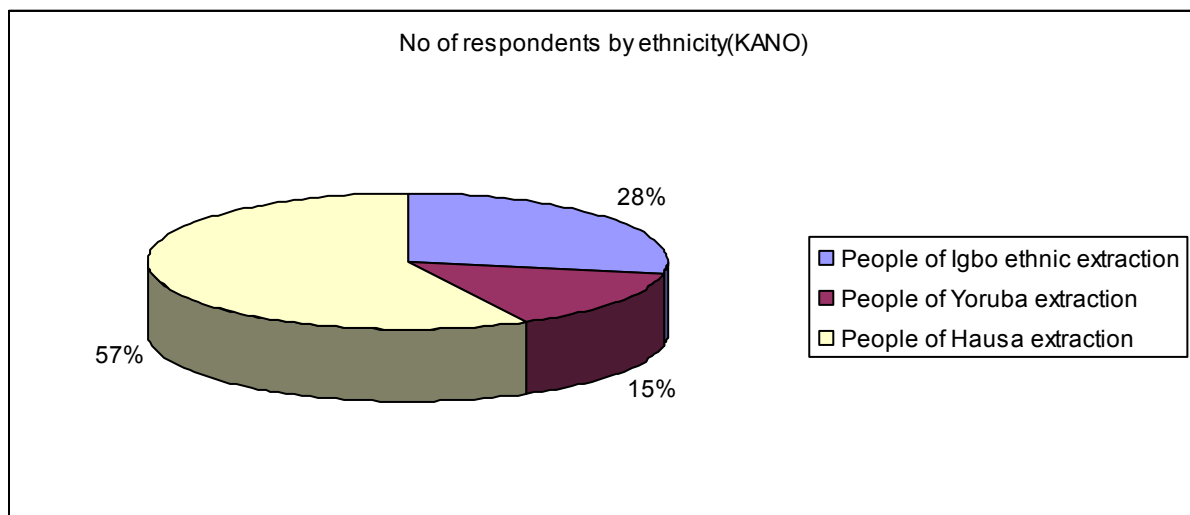


Figure 5.14 showing the percentage of respondents in the Questionnaire Interviews in Kano by ethnicity (Source Okoro 2011).

Majority of the respondents in the town of Kano are people of Hausa-Fulani stock. They formed 57 percent of the total respondents in Kano. Being the biggest Hausa-Fulani city in Nigeria, it provides good political environment needed for the purpose of this study. The next in Population in the City of Kano are the people of Igbo extraction. The Igbo formed 28 percent of the respondents in Kano. The people of Igbo extraction engage mainly in trade and commerce, and a few number of them, who work in some of the Federal Government Parastatals located in Kano. The Yoruba people, who contributed to this research study in Kano, formed 15 percent of the overall respondents. The people of Yoruba extraction, who reside in Kano, engage also in trade and commerce like the Igbo. But despite the large presence of people from Igbo and Yoruba ethnic nationalities in Kano, the political mood, philosophy and political equation remains volatile and unpredictable.

No of Respondents by Sex: 54	
Male	42
Female	12

Table 5.16 Show the number of respondents in Kano by Gender (Source, Okoro 2011).

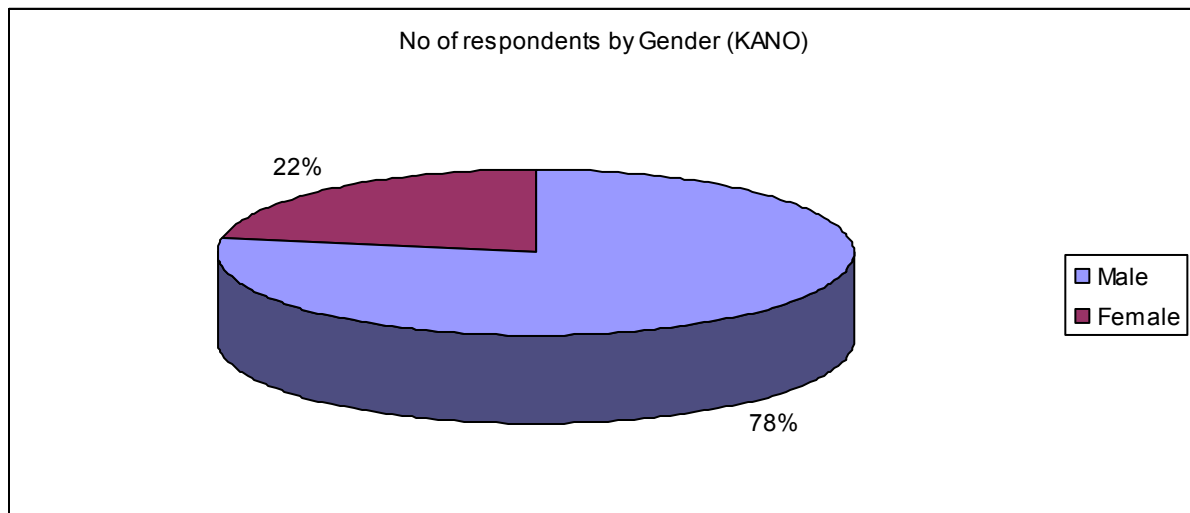


Figure 5.15. A display of the respondents numbers by Gender (Source, Okoro 2011).

The Gender classification of the respondents that is chosen by the Author for the purpose of this study remains men dominated. The reason is directly connected to the fact that, politics in the environment of the Hausa-Fulani is a men dominated issue. However, it is usually difficult to see women who will volunteer to discuss politics either in the open or in a secluded place. Most women often argued that they have little or no profound knowledge about politics in the country. The Men formed 78 percent of the respondents, with the Women forming just 22 percent of the total number of the contributors in Kano. This is however irrespective of the ethnic affiliation of the respondents. Like in the words of Gwarzo, who said that,

“within the Hausa-Fulani community politics of any kind remains a Male dominated venture”<sup>16</sup>.

As enumerated in the chapter three of this study, the Hausa-Fulani community is a society nurtured with a strong feudalistic structure in the past. The emirate administrative pattern as established by the Islamic jihad's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the

Hausaland created man dominated society in the region. However, several women participated actively in the 2011 general election. But the average electoral success of women in politics within the region is usually minimal. The poor electoral returns as recorded by women in the region condemned most of the women to function in the background. In the 2011 national election, no woman politician was elected into either the Kano state House of Assembly, or as a national Legislator. Women hardly emerge as candidates in any of the political parties in the Hausa-Fulani region. Moreover, women in the region do not have the capacity and resources to compete favourable with the men on a large scale, but usually get appointed to serve in any formed government.

Total number of Respondents by Age: 54	
18 – 29	30
30 -49	8
50 and Above	16

Table 5.17 show the number of the respondents by age in Kano (Source, Okoro 2011).

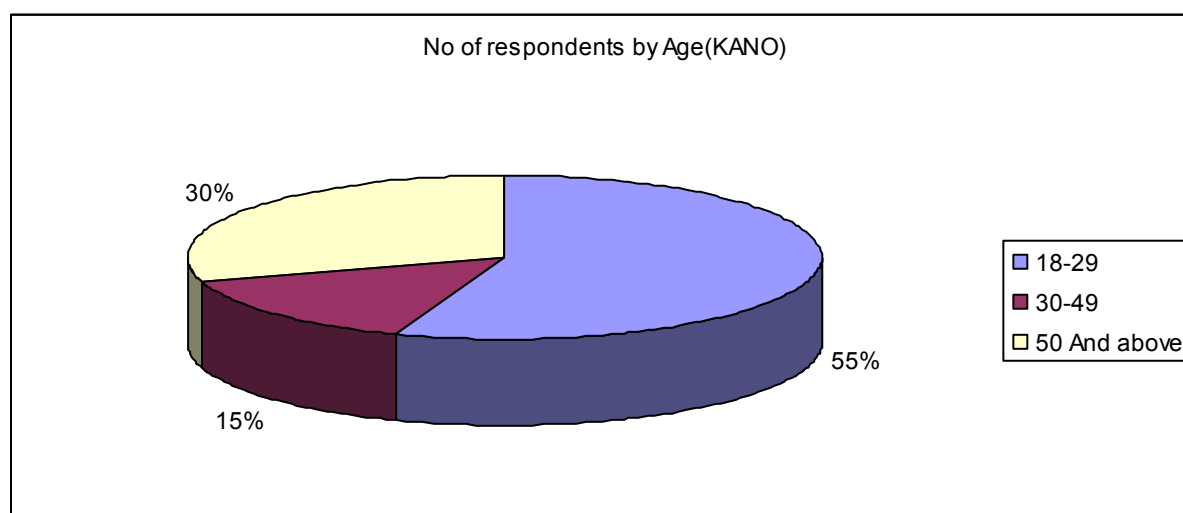


Figure 5.16. Show the number of the respondents by age in Kano (Source, Okoro 2011).

The graphic above displays the age bracket of the respondents in Kano. As depicted already through the profession of the respondents, it will be noted that the people in the academic community formed the biggest number of contributors in Kano. It is also

like that in the age of the respondents. Those under the age of 30 are in the majority, compare to people of other age categories. Those respondents within the age of 18 to 29 formed 55 percent of the total contributors. Then, the respondents within the age range of 50 years and above formed 30 percent of the respondents, with only 15 percent of the respondents within the age of 30 to 49 years.

The age distribution of the respondents did not in any way influence the outcome of the people's opinion, with regard to their behaviour toward people from other ethnic nations. With the age range, one would want to believe that there would be a shift in political philosophy. Since the age range shows that the respondents were of young age, it would be assumed that their response will be more liberal and different from their old and aged Folks conservative philosophy.

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16. Umaru Gwarzo is a local politician in Naibawa Quarters, a suburb in Kano City. He was reacting to the low level of active participation of women in the Hausa-Fulani part of the northern region of the country.



### 5.3.

### Western Region. Abeokuta

Another case study was carried out in Abeokuta, the capital town of Ogun State. Abeokuta is also situated in the south west of Nigeria. The ancient town is located close to Lagos in the south, and town of Ibadan lying in the north (see Map 5.3 and Map 5.3b below). The Western region of Nigeria is the homeland of the Yoruba nation. It is peopled by those who claimed to have a common ancestor and traditional heritage.

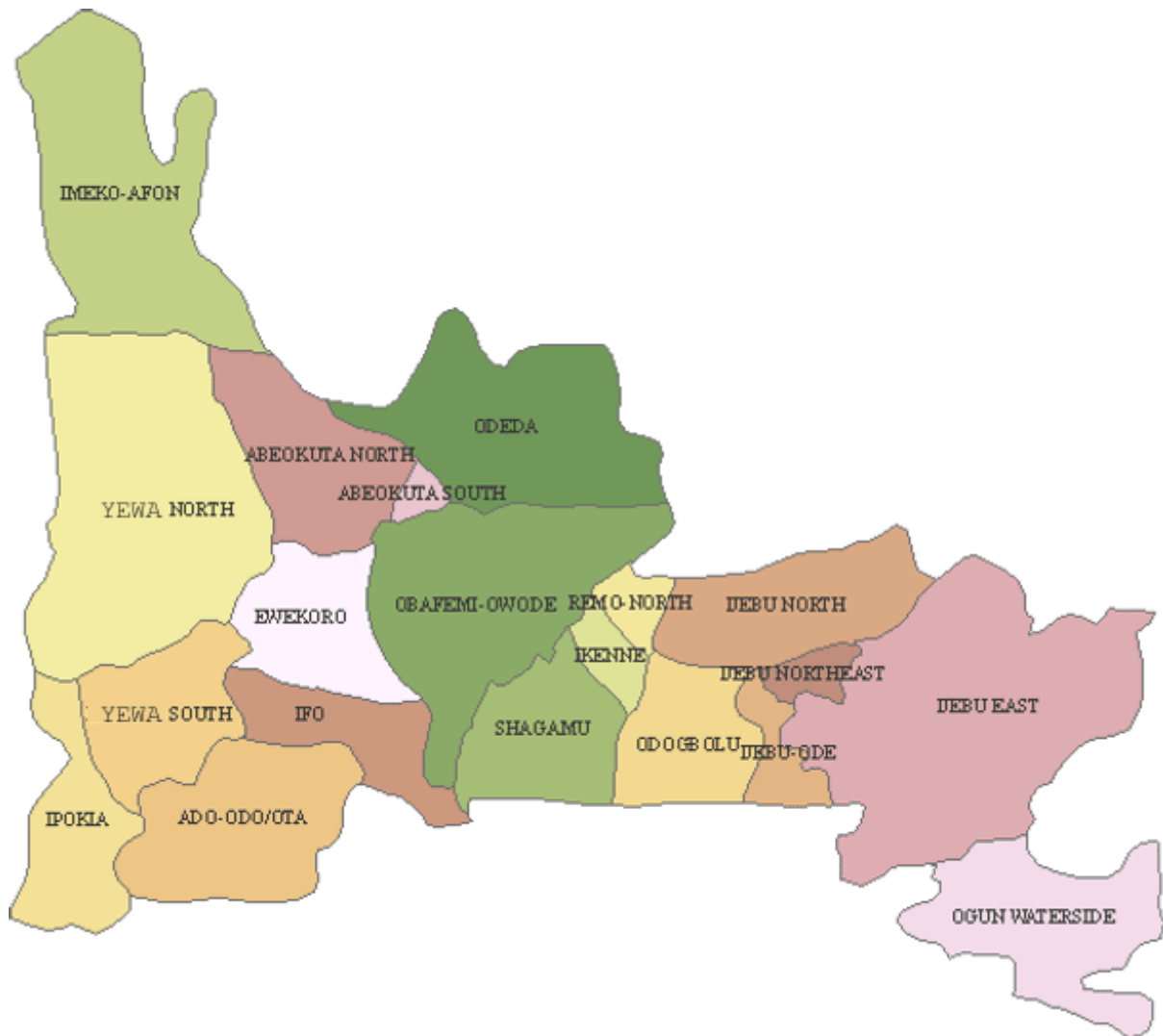


Map 5.4. Showing the town of Abeokuta north of Lagos. (Source Magellan geographix 1992)

(i)

### Areas.

The area covered in this region of Nigeria, provides the needed environment for the realisation of flexible, comprehensive and reliable information, which this research requires. Politics as it reflects the internal opinion of the people are found in every aspect of life in this ethnic community.



Map 5.4b. Showing Ogun State, with Abeokuta at the North-west of the Map. (Source. Sia4life.com)

(ii) **Class.**

The characteristics of people, who participated in the questions and in other settings, are drawn from different background within the Yoruba ethnic community. There are people from the political organisations, as well as non professional politicians. There are also people from the academic, and people from other aspect of the civil society. It is not a restricted selection of people or participants.

(iii). **Issues.**

The Questions presented to the respondents were of several forms. There is the Questionnaire format and there is the interview format, though in different formations. The issues raised are purely issues that affect everybody within the ethnic society, as well as issues that affect the entire country. This issue includes though not restricted

to ethnic political relevance, relationship with other ethnic groups within the country, and the consequences of ethnic influenced political ideology.

(iv). **Factors.**

Political ideas as expressed by majority of the respondents in Abeokuta are based on different political arguments. The entrenched political culture associated to the Yoruba people in the previous political dispensation in Nigeria made it possible for this Author to regard the Yoruba ethnic group as people that dwell on elements of socialist or in another way, welfare political ideology.

### 5.3.1. The Voting Pattern of the Yoruba during National election in Nigeria.

Certain factors define the voting direction of a typical Yoruba person. In the 2011 Presidential election in the country, the known voting pattern of the Yoruba changed dramatically. The qualification, ethnic identity and party manifesto of an individual candidate did not play any significant role in the political calculation of the people within this area of Nigeria. This idea cut across every strata of human existence in the political calculation of the Yoruba people. What usually formed a great force of ballot determination through the generated responses is the position of the Yoruba ethnic group in the government to be formed by the victorious political party. If there is the prospect of having people of Yoruba extraction in the sensitive positions in the government, then for sure majority of the people will cast their ballots for the candidates of the said political party. But when non-Yoruba person is contesting for the position of the President, then, the normal Yoruba election trade-marks are put aside. There is usually low voter turn-out in the whole of Yorubaland. (See Table 5.18 below, and also Table 9.2, a-b).

What shapes your mind as you go to vote in the 2011 Presidential election? Resp: 44			
Questionnaire interview in Abeokuta.	Partly	Very Strongly	Never
Your Religion and the religion of the candidate?	13	4	27
Your Ethnicity and Cultural Affinity with the candidate?	5	3	36
Your Regional Identity and that of the candidate?	5	3	36
The Candidate Party Manifesto?	10	8	26
Quality and Qualification of the candidate?	12	5	27
Your Economic Situation?	10	13	21

Table 5.18 a questionnaire showing the participants motivations during elections (Source, adapted from Afro-barometer, with modification Okoro 2011)

Another salient factor determining the political direction amongst the Yoruba is the issue of ethnic identity of the candidate during national election. Most findings suggest that the ethnic identity of a candidate is an important factor when individuals began to analyse the chances of the Yoruba in the affairs of the country. As it is, people use ethnicity to determine their voting preferences during elections. But that is so far as the there is no candidate of Yoruba descent is among the contestants.

But then the political climate of Nigeria does provide need for this apprehension. So people are usually bent on having a strong ethnic representation in the government, just in order to safeguard the interest of their people. However from the recorded responses from the research field it was discovered that religion and regional affiliation had little or no influence on how the Yoruba people cast their ballots, either as group or as individuals in the April 2011 Presidential election (see Table 5.19 and Figure 5.17 below).

Above all, during the April 2011 Presidential election, ethnic and regional identity of the candidates nominated by the various political parties present the lowest motivating factors in shaping the political opinion and voting preference within the Yoruba nation (see Table 5.18 above). It is often assumed that the programme that a political party intend to implement, when it wins an election and formed a government is the same as the candidate representing the party in an election. It is argued, that, it is not the party per se that runs the government or implement these policies, but it is the individual who stands as the governance machinery.

You voted a candidate during the April 2011 Presidential election because of the followings. (outcome of 4 Focus-group interviews in Abeokuta)

No of Respondents in Abeokuta: 44	
Ethnic Identity	11
Religion	4
Qualification of the candidate	15
Party Programme	10
Regional Affiliation with candidate	4

Table 5.19. Showing the number of respondents in Abeokuta, who voted in the election.

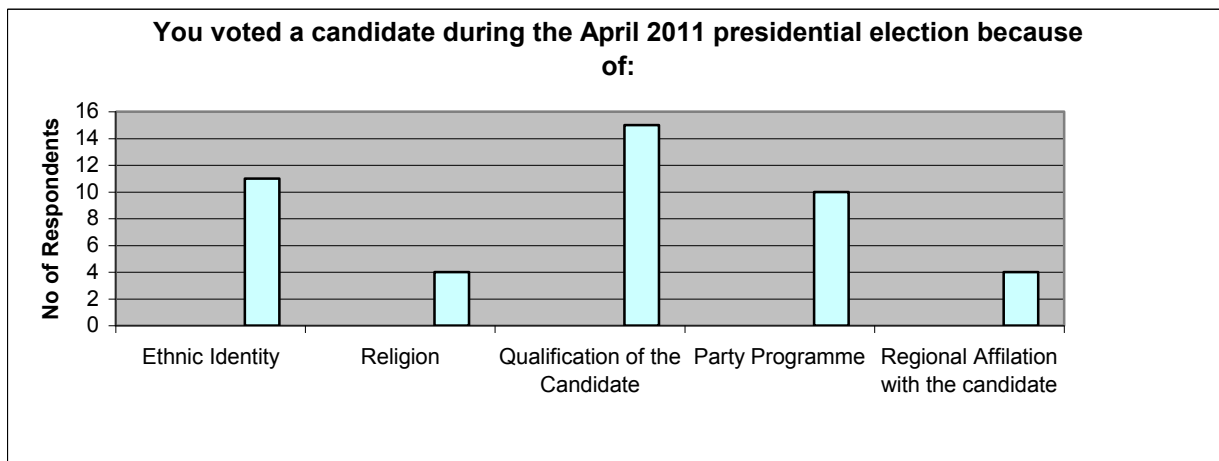


Figure 5.17. A Graph Displaying the opinion of the Respondents in Abeokuta.

### 5.3.2. Ethnic Mindset and Frames in Yoruba Land.

Like in every other ethnic nation within Nigeria, the Yoruba also exhibit strong political as well as cultural reservation about others in Nigeria. Nevertheless the people of Yoruba extraction always describe or refer anybody of Igbo extraction as “Omo Igbo” (Igbo person), “Omo Nnaa” (fathers Child), “Omo Okoro” (Okoro is a typical Igbo male name), “Omo Aje Okuta ma mu Omi” (someone who feed on stones without drinking water). A Yoruba will go further to refer anybody of Hausa-Fulani stock as “Malam” (teacher). Each time any of the frames is used, it simple shows the difference between the individual speaker and his reference point.

This extended also to politics, as nobody of Igbo or Yoruba extraction can trust the other person. This political mistrust originated from the 1<sup>st</sup> Nigerian democratic dispensation between 1960 and 1966 commonly referred to as First Republic. At the period, the NCNC dominated by people of Igbo extraction formed political alliance with the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) to form the Government at the National level, and thus forced the Action Group (AG) to go into Opposition at the National Parliament. Also in the western regional Assembly, the Action Group (AG), a Yoruba regional party, lured the parliamentarians of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon to decamp to Action Group, thereby removing the presence the of NCNC from the western region. This action led to many political dislocations between the people of Igbo ethnic nationality and the Yoruba. According to Emmanuel O Ezeani,

“the outcome of the 1960s political dispensation was the mistrust that existed between the Igbo and the Yoruba”<sup>17</sup>

He went further to say that, “the situation escalated largely because of the role the Yoruba played during the Civil War of 1967-1970 that erupted between the Eastern region and the rest of the country, with the Yoruba supporting the Hausa-Fulani majority Northern region. With the open political animosity between the Igbo, and the Yoruba, the people of Yoruba extraction never had any political alliance with the Igbo. Instead, it is more convenient for the Yoruba to strike political accord with the Hausa-Fulani. Just as one Chief Abiodun in Abeokuta, while describing the political scenario in 2003 within the Yoruba homeland explained that,

“the political alliance that existed between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani in 2033 was out of convenience”<sup>18</sup>.

### **5.3.3. The Yoruba Political Philosophy and Politics in Nigeria.**

In every electoral democracy, qualified individuals are attracted by the Manifesto and programmes of contesting candidates and their parties. The Yoruba people have for many years in the past exhibited a distinct voting preference. From the first republic democratic politics, where people and politicians like late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Late Ladoke Akintola, and many more established the socialist political welfare system.

The Action Group programme contained issues like Free Education, Free Medical Services, and other issues like Agricultural development, and Infrastructural development strongly keyed into the political calculation of the Yoruba in the 1960s. In 1979 2<sup>nd</sup> republic politics, Chief Obafemi Awolowo brought the 1960s political programme into his Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Indeed, the Unity Party of Nigeria, as a political party was purely a Yoruba Party. It is meant to champion the cause of the Yoruba Nation. The party won elections in the western region of Nigeria with convincing results. This scenario is also repeating itself in the present democratic dispensation.

From the Alliance for Democracy (AD), to Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the mood of the Yoruba remains that the Party is for them, and so serves as a Platform through which they can actualise their political philosophy. The political ideology, which the defunct Action Group instilled in the political calculation of many people within Yorubaland created a mindset that make them portray their ethnic group as people with superior culture. According to table 5.20 and figure 5.19 below, the participants in a questionnaire in Abeokuta expressed their feelings on how they feel about their identities.

Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a Nigerian and being a Yoruba, which of the following statements best expresses your feelings? Questionnaire for only people of Yoruba descent.	
No of Respondent in Abeokuta: 44	
I feel only Nigerian	2
I feel equally Nigerian and Yoruba	7
I feel more Nigerian than Yoruba	5
I feel more Yoruba than Nigerian.	18
I feel only Yoruba	12

Table 5.20 showing the number of respondents in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2009)

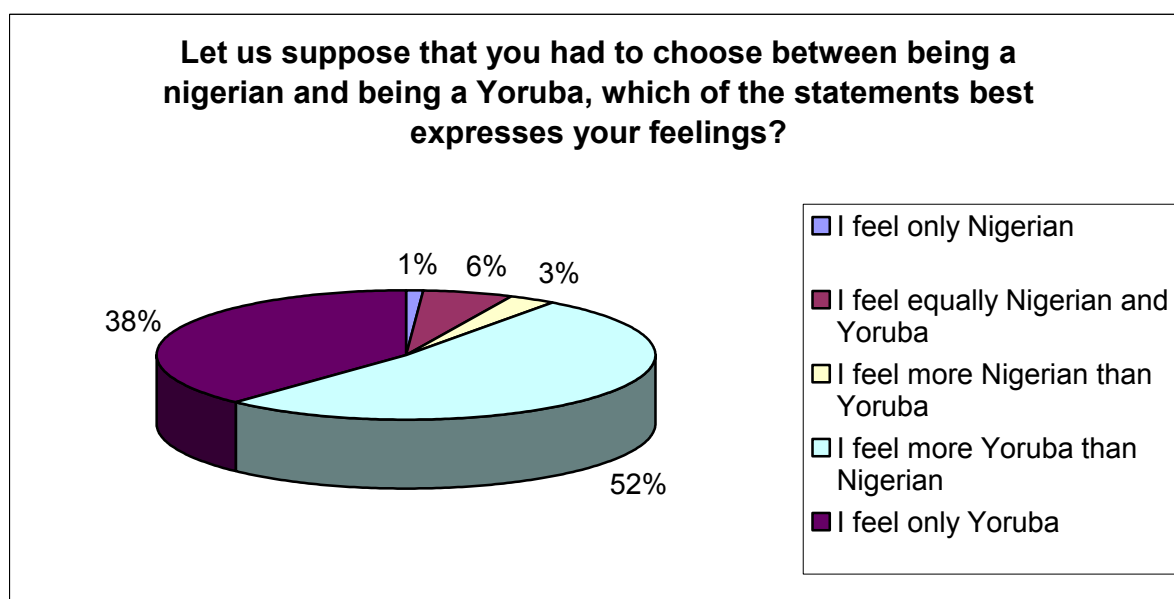


Figure 5.18 showing respondents response in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

The data contained in figure 5.18 above indicate that 26 respondents representing 56 percent of the total number of respondents in the questionnaire interview in Abeokuta. This set of respondents submitted that they feel to be more Yoruba than Nigerian, while another group of 12 respondents representing 38 percent of the total number of participants, maintained that they feel themselves to be Yoruba alone. Only 6 percent of the respondents said that they feel to be equally Nigerian as well as Yoruba. What this finding represent is that a total 94 percent of the respondents to the question of identity in Abeokuta regard Yoruba ethnic identity as their real and true identity.

In like manner, during a field study conducted within Abeokuta, it was discovered that majority of the respondents do not know much about the manifestos of some of the registered political parties and also about the individual candidates political intentions. Politicians hardly developed their own individual election agenda on what they stand to do or provide for their electoral Constituencies. Most Politicians depended solely on the goodwill a political party enjoys within the society. But in Yorubaland unlike in Igboland, the electorates focused more on a political party, rather than the antecedent of a contesting candidate, irrespective of his party platform.

However, the majority of the Yoruba, who benefited immensely from the political programme of the late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowos' Action Group of the 1960s and the Unity Party of Nigeria of the 1980s, are always willing to connect to the political party or individual politician, who tends to identify with the 4 cardinal points of the sage political philosophy.

Total number of Respondents in Abeokuta by Profession: 44	
Scholars in 1 University	2
Politicians	17
Businessmen and Business women	10
Students	15

Table 5.21. Showing the number of participants in Abeokuta by profession (Source Okoro 2011)

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17. Emmanuel O. Ezeani is a professor of Political Science at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka

18. Chief Odumosu Abiodun is strong member of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and a community organiser in Abeokuta.



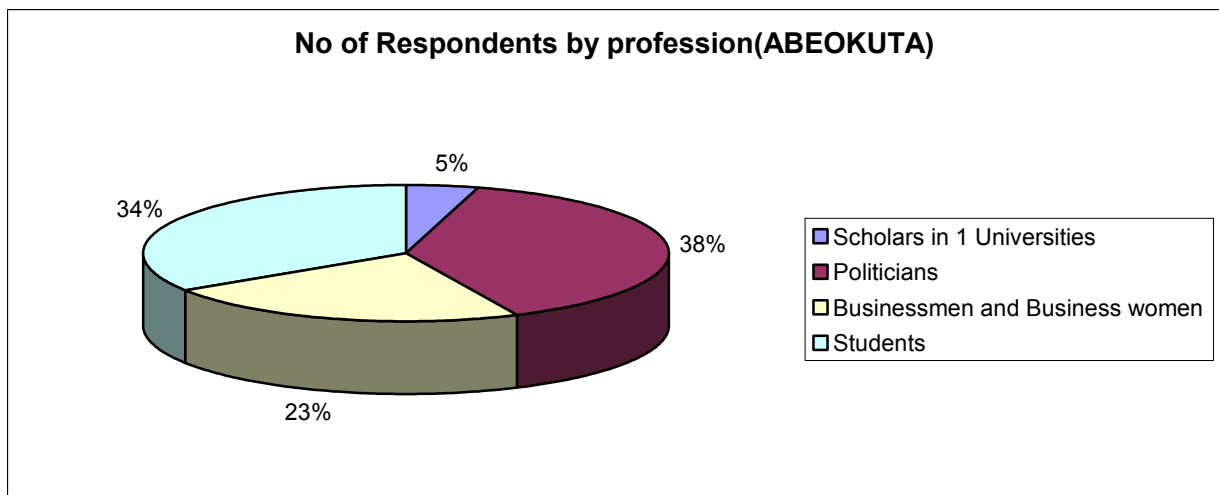


Figure 5.19. Showing the percentage of participants in Abeokuta by profession (Source, Okoro 2011)

In contrast to other two ethnic nationalities, respondents who described themselves as card carrying members of registered political parties, and who contributed to this field research study in Abeokuta, formed a large part of the total respondents. These identified politicians, or people who are politically inclined were mostly of Yoruba ethnic extraction. They made up 38 percent of the total respondents in Abeokuta, while the combined respondents from the academic community of both teaching staffs and Students make up 39 percent of the total contributors. Then, 23 percent of the contributors came from the business community. Contribution from the academic community was derived through two different channels. The first channel was through one on one individual interview with members of the teaching staff interviewed. The other part was a done through a random selection of participants in a focus-group interview. Participants were selected from among students from the University of Agriculture located in the town, and they came from varying background as well as from different ethnic nationalities.

Total number of Respondents in Abeokuta by Ethnicity: 44	
People of Igbo Ethnic extraction	14
People of Yoruba extraction	25
People of Hausa/Fulani extraction	5

Table 5.22. Showing the number of participants in Abeokuta by Ethnicity (Source, Okoro 2011).

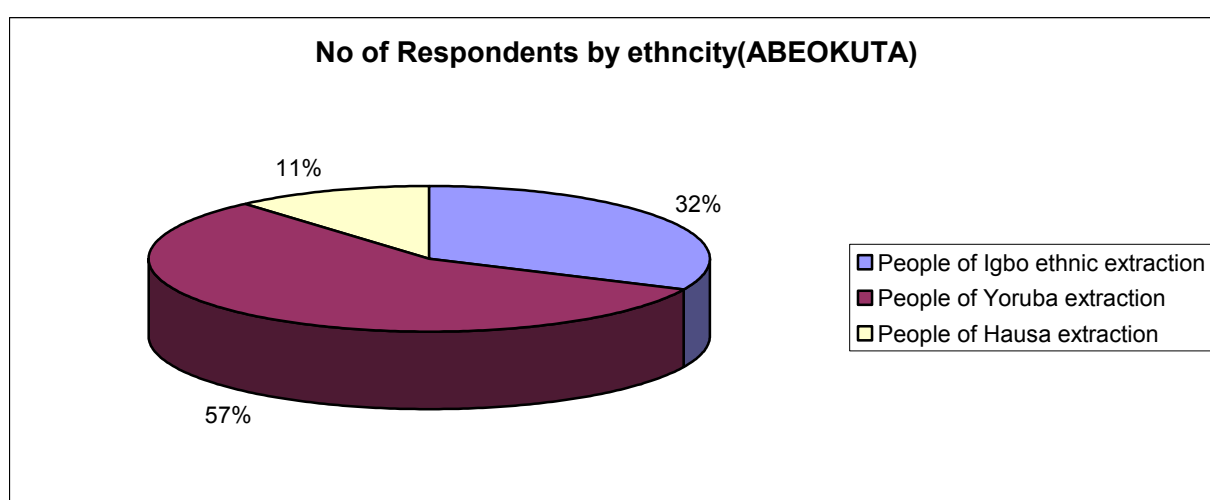


Figure 5.20. Showing the percentage of participants in Abeokuta by Ethnicity (Source, Okoro 2011)

Like in other case study areas for this research study, the majority of the contributors are of Yoruba ethnic group. The people of Yoruba extraction represent 68 percent of the total number of respondents in Abeokuta. While the people of Igbo extraction, who contributed to this study in Abeokuta representing 32 percent of the total contributors. Unlike in the case study area of Enugu, the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group featured in Abeokuta, and comprises 11 percent of the respondents.

Total number of Respondents in Abeokuta by Gender: 44	
Male	28
Female	16

Table 5.23. Showing the number of participants in Abeokuta by Gender (Source, Okoro 2011)

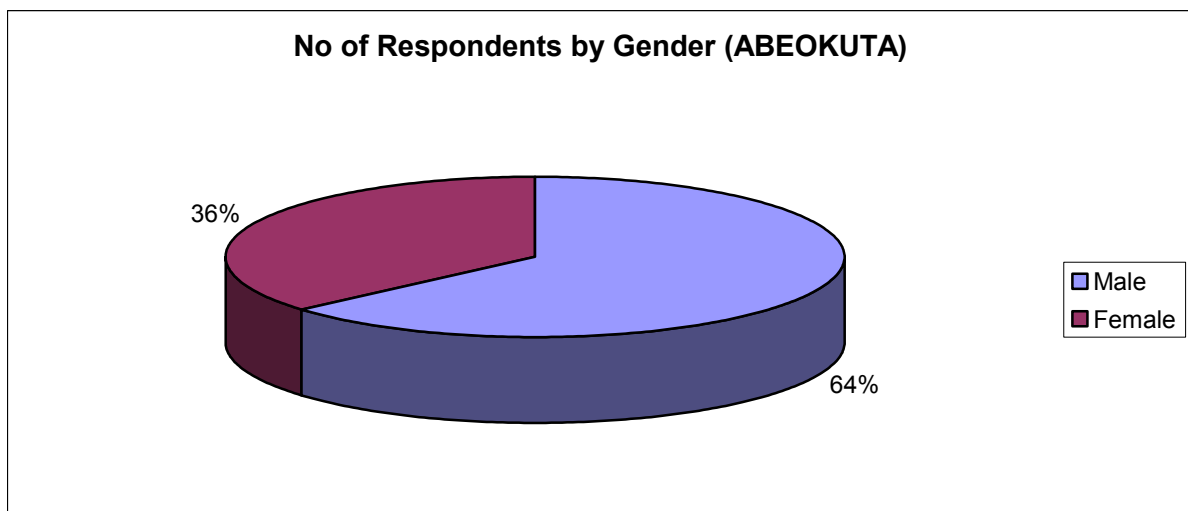


Figure 5.21. Showing the percentage of the participants in Abeokuta by Gender (Source, Okoro, 2011)

The respondents are made up of males and females. The male consists of 28 respondents representing 64 percent of the total contributors, while the number of female respondents is 16 representing 36 percent of the overall number of respondents. The number of the participants was not deliberately structured in that order; rather it was determined by the availability of willing participants. The outlook of figure 5.21 was not to create too wide difference in the gender of the opinion providers. In table 5.23, it showed that the male participant comprises of 28 persons, and the female consist of 16 persons. The participants were drawn from diverse backgrounds, and they comprise also people from among the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani. The inclusion of people from the three ethnic nationalities in each of the case study area was question dependent. Certain questions were structured solely for the natives of the case study area, while some questions embraces all natives of the three ethnic groups.

Total number of Respondents in Abeokuta by Age: 44	
18 – 29	11
30 – 49	24
50 and Above	9

Table 5.24. Showing the number of participants in Abeokuta by Age (Source, Okoro 2011)

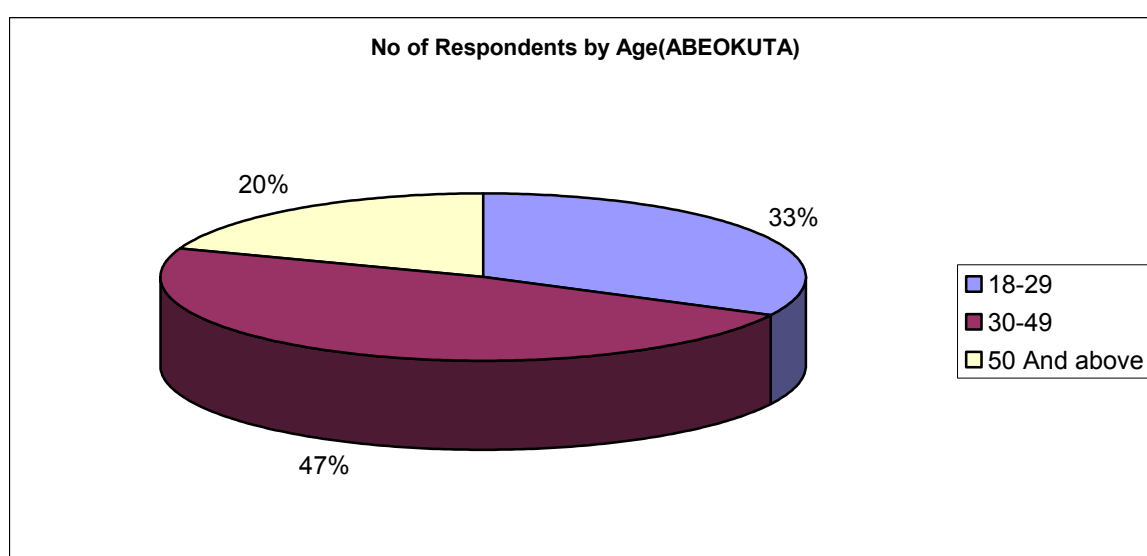


Figure 5.22. Showing the percentage of the participants in Abeokuta by Age (Source, Okoro 2011)

The age of the contributors varies. Those respondents within the age bracket of between 30 to 49 years consist of 24 respondents representing 47 percent of the total respondents. They are drawn mainly from the business and academic communities. While those respondents within the Age bracket of between 18 to 29 years consist of 11 respondents representing 33 percent of the overall number of contributors. These people are drawn particularly from the academic, as well from the business communities. Only 20 percent of the respondents are within the age bracket of 50 years and above. These contributors are mostly politicians and some senior academics.

#### 5.4. Comparative Features from the three ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Which of the following Statement is close to your own Opinion? A Questionnaire

No of Respondents in Enugu: 18

A	Democracy will help to eliminate ethnocentrism in Nigeria	2
B	Democracy cannot change the eternally entrenched ethnic consciousness in Nigeria	13
C	For someone like me, it does not matter what kind of Political System we have in Nigeria	3

Table 5.25. Showing the total number of participants responses in Enugu (Source, Okoro 2011)

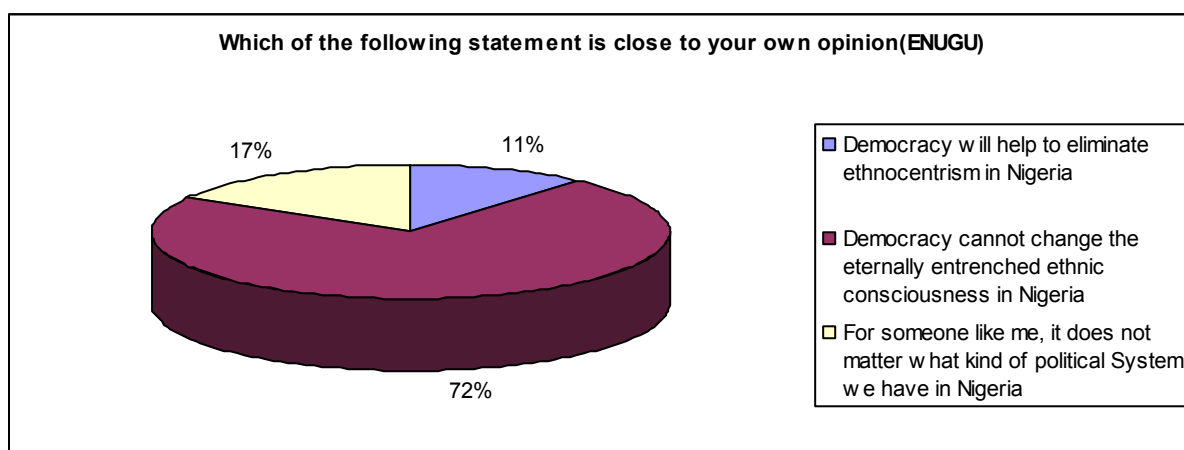


Figure 5.23. Showing the percentage of the participants responses in Enugu (Source, Okoro 2011)

In comparative terms, the various individuals that participated in the Interviews expressed both positive and negative opinions about the future of democratic politics in the country. The respondents who were of Igbo extraction expressed themselves differently in comparison to people of Yoruba extraction. Majority of the Igbo that responded to the research questions believe that democracy cannot change the eternally entrenched ethnic consciousness in Nigeria. The number of these people number 72 percent of the total contributors. Only 11 percent of the respondents agreed that democracy will help eliminate ethnocentrism in Nigeria. While 17 percent of the contributors stated that it does not matter to them, what kind of political System Nigeria has or adopted.

Which of the following Statement is close to your own Opinion? A Questionnaire

No of Respondents in Kano: 15		
A	Democracy will help to eliminate ethnocentrism in Nigeria	3
B	Democracy cannot change the eternally entrenched ethnic consciousness in Nigeria	7
C	For someone like me, it does not matter what kind of political system we have in Nigeria	5

Table 5.26. Showing the total number of respondents in Kano (Source, Okoro 2011)

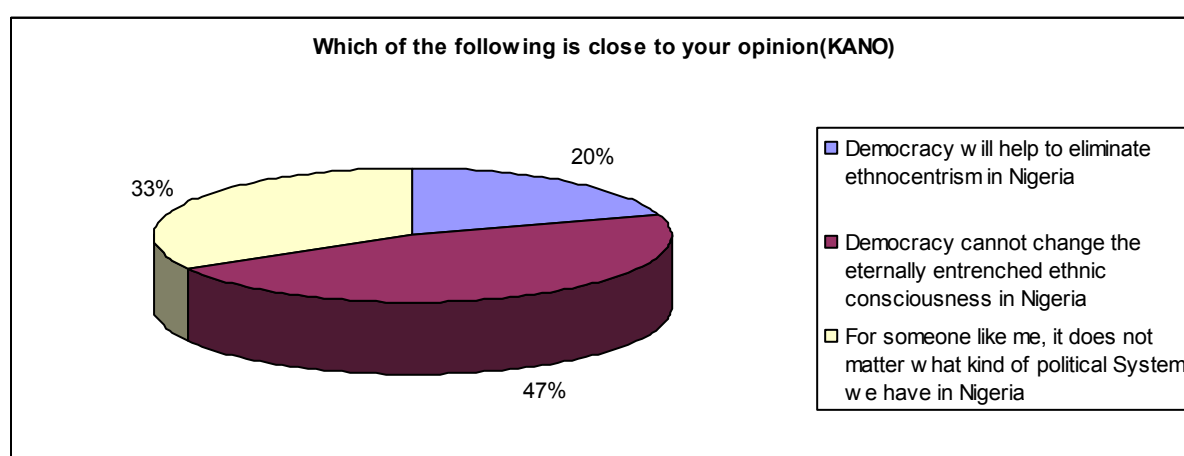


Figure 5.24. Showing the percentages of respondents responses in Kano (Source, Okoro 2011)

Within the Hausa-Fulani community, most of the people that contributed to the issues raised were of the opinion that democracy cannot change the eternally entrenched ethnic consciousness in Nigeria. About 47 percent of the respondents agreed that democracy cannot change anything. Kabir Matto reiterated that,

“in as much as every political discourse in Nigeria is tailored along ethnic line, then democracy in Nigeria will continually remain ethnic based”<sup>19</sup>.

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19. Kabir Matto is a Professor of Political Science, University of Abuja, Nigeria. He was emphatic in his argument that the manner politics is played in the country does not create favourable condition necessary for democratic politics to succeed.

Only about 20 percent of the overall respondents agreed that democracy will help eliminate ethnic based politics in Nigeria. While 33 percent of the respondents were of the political opinion, that it does not matter to them, what kind of political system that Nigeria operate. Like one Abdullahi rightly said that,

“the ideological bareness of the registered Political Parties in Nigeria does not create room for the electorates to believe that democracy can change the face of politics in Nigeria”<sup>20</sup>.

In all, it is only a sum of 20 percent of the respondents which showed positive opinion about the state of democratic politics in Nigeria today; while about 80 percent of the contributors showed negative opinion on the state of democracy in Nigeria.

Which of the following Statement is close to your own Opinion? A Questionnaire

No of Respondents in Abeokuta: 15

A	Democracy will help to eliminate ethnocentrism in Nigeria	1
B	Democracy cannot change the eternally entrenched ethnic consciousness in Nigeria	6
C	For someone like me, it does not matter what kind of Political System we have in Nigeria	8

Table 5.27. Showing the total number of respondents in Abeokuta (Source, Okoro 2011)

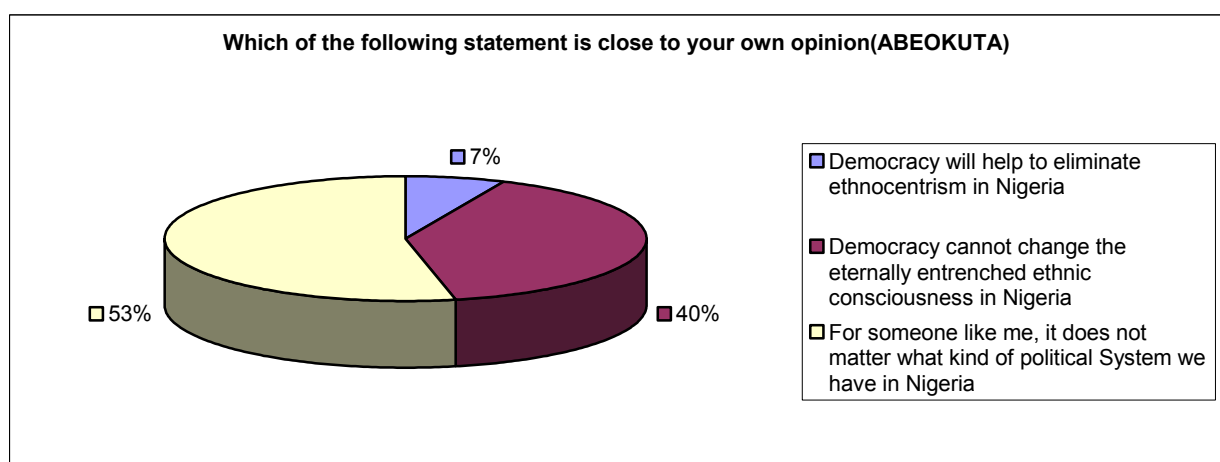


Figure 5.25. Showing the percentage of participants responses in Abeokuta (Source, Okoro 2011)

Within the Yoruba nation, the trend was equally the same. A whole 53 percent of the respondents; that is half of the entire contributors in Abeokuta agreed that the political system in Nigeria do not in any way mean anything to them. But interestingly, it is only 7 percent of the contributors subscribed that democracy will help to eliminate ethnic political biased in the Nigerian state. While a total of 40 percent of the respondents were of the political opinion that democracy cannot change the ethnic consciousness of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria.

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20. Yinusa Abdullahi is public servant in one of the Ministries in Abuja, Nigeria. He insisted that if the political parties do not designed a mechanism to assuage the public fear, democracy will continue to slide in the country.



## Chapter 6.

### **6. Democracy: The Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba in Nigeria.**

Democracy as it is envisaged in the Nigerian polity was meant to create conducive political character within the country, and this is irrespective of the various ethnic identifications in the state of Nigeria. It was not designed to be hijacked by any individual group or persons. It was not to be defined by domination of any sort by any ethnic identity, or ethnic political philosophy. The idea that propels democracy is to create a level and equal playing ground for every willing participating individual, group of persons, or any formed association within the defined political environment.

It was not to be defined by ethnic colouration or act of exclusion. Democracy itself recognises ethnic differences in every human society, but it does not respect ethnic based political philosophies. In many other societies where democratic politics is in place, the people do not use their linguistics differences to divide the polity, as to decide who is to be included or excluded in governance of the society, nor do the voters go to the Polls to cast their ballots on the strength of their ethnic beliefs. Put differently, where the candidate or aspirants for political posts hails from is usually insignificant, provided the individuals put forward by the sponsoring political parties are constitutionally qualified, and as such capable of meeting the needs of the common man and woman in the target society. Even in the western democracies of Switzerland and Belgium, with fractured population based on language differences, the people go to poll to elect their representatives mainly on the basis of party manifesto, and individual candidate antecedent.

In Nigeria, the reverse is the case; ethnic political colouration is noticed in every stage of democratic dispensation in the country. Be it a normal man to man discussion on politics in Nigeria, Group debate on the way forward in the democratic politics in the country, or a national discussion on how to move the country forward politically. Every participating individual goes to the debate with his ethnic political philosophy, as well as the political mindset his ethnic group hold against other parts in the Nigerian State (See figure 5.2, 5.12, and 5.19 in Chapter 5).

The medical questions and political uncertainties created by the sudden ill health of the Late President of Nigeria, Umaru Yar Adua gives credence to this situation. The absence of the President from his office was a Constitutional issue. But instead of turning to the relevant portions of the country's Constitution, the people turned it to that of ethnic political drama. Not only that it became an ethnic issue, it thus turned the country into different camps. It developed from ethnic Camps, to political Camps, and from there on to North and South dichotomy. Every idea and suggestions negated the fact that the Constitution was capable of resolving the conflict generated. The mode of succession by the next in Command in the Presidency was clearly stated in the Constitution of Nigeria 1999<sup>1</sup>. The argument in the country became misconceived and politically contentious. The debate made Professor Ezeani to conclude that,

“what was to be a political issue was eventually turned into an ethnic and regional contest”<sup>2</sup>.

He reasoned that the lawmakers who by nature of their function within the administration of the country, should have calmed all the fledging nerves, and doused the controversy created by first the absence of the President in the country, and secondly, the nature and duration of the President's ill health. But instead, they allowed the situation to assume a dangerous dimension before they reacted with the enactment of the controversial “Doctrine of Necessity”. Accordingly, the national Parliamentarians chorused that the step was necessitated to avoid creating a vacuum in the chain of the administration, and to prevent a situation, where the country will have no substantive President. So, the parliament submitted that the introduction of the principle as a Justification for the political situation in the country. It was furthered argued by Professor Obasi Igwe that,

“the situation was not envisaged by any person, and so it was not a creation of anybody”<sup>3</sup>.

But then, the enactment of the Doctrine did not in any way clear away the controversy the whole scenario created. Many scholars argued that the Lawmakers acted wrongly, and others argued that they reacted very late. There are also people who were of the opinion that the action of the Lawmakers by introducing the Doctrine

was unconstitutional. The later reasoned that there was no place in the Nigerian Constitution, where such doctrine is recognised. But in defence of the action of his Constituency, the Parliament, the Senate President stated that;

“The doctrine of necessity requires that we do what is necessary, when faced with a situation that is not contemplated by the constitution. And that is precisely what we have done today. In doing so, we have maintained the sanctity of our constitution as the ultimate law of the land.”<sup>4</sup>

Although the case of Dr Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan is not the first time Nigeria would have an acting president. Looking at the military coup d’etat of 15th January, 1966, Dr. Abyssinia Akweke Nwafor Orizu, the then president of the Senate, acted as president. This was as a result of the absence of the Prime Minister, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the then Head of Government, who was killed by the Coup plotters. The President of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Head of State, was outside the country at the time the Government was overthrown by the military. Being the most senior government official available and present within the territorial sphere of Nigeria at the time, Dr. Orizu announced that the Parliament decided voluntarily to transfer power to the head of Army.

However, it is the opinion of this Author that the different political reactions created two divergent political opinions in the country. First is the problem of Constitutionality of the action of the Parliament. The second problem created is that of ethnic interpretation of the event. On the Constitutional question, the Lawmakers posited that they acted on the best interest of the country. The cited the more than 60 days absence of the President in office as creating a vacuum in the chain of decision making and authority.

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1. See section 144 and Section 145 of the 1999 Federal Constitution of Nigeria.

2. Ezeani E. O. is a Professor of political science at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

3. Obasi Igwe is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He was responding to question during an interview at the University, on the 07/11/2010

4. See Tribune Newspapers, Online Edition, 16/02/2010, [www.tribuneonline.com.ng](http://www.tribuneonline.com.ng)

But an opponent of the doctrine; Yahaya Kwande argued that, since the President has not been declared incapacitated, as to confirm that he cannot continue to function despite his ill health, the lawmakers were wrong to introduce such a doctrine. He based his opposition on the premise that the President did not send any authorising letter or made any pronouncement to warrant such action. And to consolidate this position on the debate, a member of the federal Cabinet refers to the provision of Section 145 of the 1999 Nigerian Federal Constitution, which says;

“whenever the President transmits to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a written declaration that he is proceeding on vacation or that he is otherwise unable to discharge the functions of his office, until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary such functions shall be discharged by the Vice-President as Acting President.”<sup>5</sup>

In view of the above stated Constitutional provision, it is logically incorrect to use the private interview granted the British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC, by the late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, as a replacement to the provision in the constitution. The interview does not qualify as a transmission of a written document to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Nigerian Legislature. The element of voluntary act was also absent or lacking. There ought to be an established fact that proved the president used the Interview to channel the information as constitutionally required. But in any case, a Constitutional Lawyer consistently argued that the Late President Umaru Musa Yar Adua did not in any way envisage that his Interview with the BBC Network will be used to invoke Section 145 of the 1999 Nigerian Federal Constitution by the members of the Nigerian Parliament. Like Mr Chijioke Ogham-Emeka pointed out that

“the declaration must be written. The BBC ‘transmission’ is not the type of ‘transmission’ envisaged by Section 145. It was electronically broadcast. The declaration must be to the stated persons and not to “the whole world”.<sup>6</sup>

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5. See 1999 Nigerian Federal Constitution, Sections 144 and 145

6. See Daily Sun Newspaper, Online Edition, 04/03/2010, [www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com)

Indeed, there was no Letter written to that effect, there was no official document to that effect, there was no official pronouncement or presentation by the Cabinet members of the Government to that effect, and the medium relied upon by the Parliamentarians to carry out the act was a foreign medium. In fact a medium that is completely outside the territorial jurisdiction of sovereign state of Nigerian.

But knowingly or unknowingly the upper Chamber of the Nigerian parliament under the leadership of Senator David Alechena Mark justified their action by promoting the Vice President Dr Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan to become the Acting President of Nigeria through the invocation of the power of Section 145 of the 1999 Federal Constitution. What this development tried to establish is the idea that the struggle for political relevance in the country has three dimensions, the constitutional, ethnic as well as the religious. Some people see the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as a struggle between the Christians and the Muslims, as leading to changes in the power configuration in the country that favour the Christians more than the Muslims.

#### 6.1. **Regional Identity as a Political Capital.**

In geographical terms, one could characterise Nigeria into 3 major regions of north, west, and east (see Map 6.1 below). But then, the definition of regions was an establishment of the colonial master, Great Britain. It thus stands as a colonial legacy. Indeed there was not any element of closeness between the three regions before the coming of the British into the geographical area called Nigeria today.

Those who inhabit the east of the River Niger as it flows down to the Atlantic Ocean identify themselves simply as easterners. Whenever discussion on the composition of the country arose, this geographical area is usually classified as the eastern region. The same goes to the other regions of northern and western parts of the River Niger<sup>7</sup>.

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7. Dr Saleh Dauda, Senior Lecturer, Department of History, University of Abuja, Interviewed 07/07/2009



Map.6.1 showing the three regional territories of the ethnic nationalities (source. [www.en.wikipedia.net](http://www.en.wikipedia.net))

But today, in the political discussion and appropriation of resources, this Tag of regional classification shapes the nature of political bargaining in Nigeria. Political debates are usually tailored along this regional sentiment. But this political classification is never without a cogent reason. A reason based on the fact that each of the regions do believe that the regions do not share or possess the same natural identity. In his write up about Nigeria and her people, Schwarz (1965: p3) rightly said that Nigeria is a collection of self contained and mutually independent Native States, separated from one another by vast distances, by differences in history and tradition, and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers. As argued Nigeria was by and large a product of foreign power. It is not a product of political bargaining. Neither was it produced through internal conquest, or dissension. Unlike in other hitherto existing countries with like natural features of Nigeria, the various

ethnic groups, and most especially the three ethnic Nations under review did not on their own volition agreed or subscribed willingly to be amalgamated when the project was consummated 1914 by the colonial Government of Great Britain.

Just like Obefemi Awolowo (1947: p 47 - 48) one of the foremost Nationalist that Nigeria has ever produced once said that Nigeria is not a Nation, but a mere geographical expression. The Late Sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo maintained that the word Nigeria is a mere distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within Nigeria from those who do not. His statement at the time also corresponded with the kind of politics he played during his political life. In line with the political philosophy of Obafemi Awolowo, the Action Congress of Nigeria is currently trying to reproduce the political agenda of the Yoruba high Chief in the present day democratic dispensation in the western region of the country.

#### **6.1.1. The Locality dilemma and the mobile Nature of the Ethnic Nations.**

When a child is born in any part of the regions, such a child is taught by the parents and Siblings to believe that he or she is from a particular region, and belongs to a particular ethnic group, and must see himself or herself as different from other children born of parents from other regions, though they are resident of the same Neighbourhood. No child is taught to believe or to know that there are people called Nigerians, rather a child is taught to identify himself or herself as either an Igbo, a Hausa or as a Yoruba, or any other minority tribe in the country. This single action gives the child, naturally bred information that makes him or her view other children in the neighbourhood with a different perception, believing that they are in competition.

So, the negative ethnic influenced “Mindset” against one ethnic group or another, and the entrenched ethnic identity consciousness is primarily nurtured from Infanthood by parents. This is so because parents sometimes discuss within the family circle how an individual or people of their ethnic group is or are being discriminated against or marginalised or despised by other ethnic group within the Nigerian State on the account of their being of a particular ethnic identity (See Tables 5.3 and figure 5.3 in chapter 5). It thus means, that an individual or a Child from any of the regions or ethnic group will always pay more attention and allegiance and solidarity to the

people of his ethnic stock and region than say to the Nigerian state (See table 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 below).

How likely do you think that Politics based on ethnicity, religion and regional allegiance will cease to be part of Politics in Nigeria? Questionnaire in Enugu.	
	No of Respondents: 72
Very Likely	5
Likely	3
Not very likely	19
Not at all likely	13
Never	27
Do not know	5

Table 6.1 showing the participants responses in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011)

How likely do you think that Politics based on ethnicity, religion and regional allegiance will be eliminated from Politics in Nigeria? Questionnaire in Abeokuta.	
	No of Respondents: 44
Very Likely	5
Likely	4
Not very likely	10
Not at all likely	6
Never	13
Do not know	6

Table 6.2 showing participants responses in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

How likely do you think that Politics based on ethnicity, religion and regional allegiance will be eliminated from Politics in Nigeria? Questionnaire in Kano.	
	No of Respondents: 54
Very Likely	1
Likely	5
Not very likely	14
Not at all likely	18
Never	9
Do not know	7

Table 6.3 showing participants responses in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

The above tables convey a representative opinion of the people within the three ethnic nationalities. According to the responses of the participants, there is a noticeable trend in the line of opinion as submitted by the participants. Participants in the three towns showed great deal of reservation about the chances of ethnicity, religion and regional politics going away from the political ideology of the three ethnic nationalities.



In Enugu, 59 participants from a total of 72 respondents were of the opinion that the three factors will never cease to be part of political discussion in Nigeria, while another 13 participants hinted that the three factors are not at all likely to cease to be part of political ideology in the three ethnic homelands. Just a mere 8 out of 72 participants in Enugu were optimistic that the three factors will cease with time to form part of political discussion in the country. In other two towns of Abeokuta and Kano, similar responses were recorded.

In Abeokuta, a total of 29 from the 44 participants were of the negative opinions about the possibility of the three factors ceasing to be determinant in elections conducted in Nigeria. Only a combined number of 9 out of total 44 participants in Abeokuta agreed that the issues of ethnic, religious and regional consideration would whittle down as part of political consideration by people from the three ethnic nationalities in Nigeria.

In the city of Kano in the northern part of the country, a total of 7 out of 54 participants submitted that they cannot say; if the three factors will cease to be of political discussion in the country or not. But at the same time total of 41 from the total number of 54 participants were of negative opinions that the issues of ethnicity, religion and regional differences would continue to feature in the political configuration of the country. The political allegiance shown or displayed by the people irrespective of the ethnic origin depict how different those who inhabit the Nigerian state are. An Individual is described or refers to through the region or ethnic group he or she originated from. But then, the existing differences do not just emerge. These differences has been there even before the 1914 amalgamation of the country by the British colonial government under Lord Lugard, who was at the period the Governor general of the British colony of Nigeria.

The amalgamation process was not done in consultation with the locals who inhabit the various areas within the geographical area in question. Though the colonial government joined the various areas and people together not for the convenience of the people under discussion, nor was it done in order to make them unify under a single belief that they are one. It was purely designed to aid the colonial government effective control of the country at the time. The amalgamation was not a cultural

amalgamation, neither was it designed to melt down the ethnic differences that each group within the colonial territory propagates.

Then it is not uncommon to see people who work within the same establishment, either governmental or private Institution in Nigeria, who do not regard each other as worthy enough to relate with him or her. There is ethnic politics in every aspect of endeavour in Nigeria. But the inability of individuals from these various ethnic groups to relate to one and another is not a colonial legacy, but a pre-colonial established norm. It is in that same vain that one might support the statement made by the foremost Nationalist Nigeria has ever produced. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was speaking during the Igbo State Union meeting in Lagos, when he said; the God of Africa has specifically created Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the ages. The Martial process of the Ibo nation of all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preserver. The Ibo nation cannot shrink its responsibility (Schwarz 1965: p 68).

According to the opinions of the people from this region of the country, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was saying the obvious. He was trying to showcase the pride of the Igbo Nation. Though he may have made this assertion, but without the intention of spiting other ethnic tribes in Nigeria in particular. But the thinking around the ethnic nations of the Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani certainly do not regard the statement as a mere political ranting. Considering the statement of Nnamdi Azikiwe as offensive, and demeaning to the pride of other ethnic groups of Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, political figures within the two tribes reacted angrily. Some of them branded Zik as an ethnic jingoist. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, an established political figure from Yoruba ethnic nation carpeted Zik and accused him of playing politics of ethnic supremacy.

## 6.2

### **Locality and Identity Dilemma.**

In traditional terms, the regions are also well differentiated through the mode of dressing by the people. In every region and tribe, there is a particular dress by which the people are identified with. In that case, though the western dress code has well influenced many people. So there is a strong shift to anything western fashion. But then, it is so easy for someone from the eastern region adapting to any dress code of

other regions or ethnic group, but the case is not the same with other regions or ethnic groups within Nigeria. By the traditional dress code, it is very easy for anyone to pick out the ethnic group or geographical region an individual in Nigeria belongs to.

In the Northern region there is common traditional attire that is connected to the people of that region. This is called “Babanriga” (big dress) in the traditional Hausa language. It is a dressing pattern made possible by the climatic condition of the region. It is a kind of attire worn in almost every part of Sahara Desert region of Africa, and precisely by Muslims in this climatic region, where the annual rainfall is less than average. As soon as one moves from either the eastern region or the western region towards the northern region, one begins to notice not just different environmental conditions but different people with different cultures.

Even in terms of social relationship, it is usually considered through the lens of ethnic and regional convenience. Someone from the eastern region will feel more comfortable dealing with another individual, who hails from the same eastern region, than to fraternise with someone else who originates from either the northern or western region. There is almost zero chance of any relationship between an individual from the northern region and someone from the eastern region. Then, there is a prudent chance of any social relationship between an individual from the western region and someone from the eastern region.

Though this development or practice is not surprising, because looking at the structure of Nigeria, historically, one would easily notice how divergent the country populace is and how the people are disentangled from each other. Each of the three ethnic homelands in Nigeria is dominantly inhabited by a particular dominant ethnic nationality. Though, in each of the three regions in Nigeria, there are also several minority ethnic groups. Each group both majority and the minority groups always try to protect its own distinct individual identity. An identity moulded around a natural language and customs (See map 3.8 in Chapter 3).

The way an Individual speaks and how such an Individual meant what he or she says goes a long way to describe or define how an individual or group of people organises or organise their thoughts. However, the way and manner a group communicates within its community, either in their ancestral homeland or outside the homeland, explains also how such groups relate and interact with one and another and also with non ethnic group members. In such a cultural and social setting, one can decipher a group way of internal relation mechanism.

Language as it is, has remain as an embodiment of culture as well as a natural medium through which different ethnic nationalities in Nigeria are identified. For every individual Nigerian, the language spoken by his or her ethnic group remains the only natural and true identity of the person (See map 3.8 in Chapter 3). In the state of Nigeria, language serves as eternal and sacred bond that binds the various ethnic groups together and also excludes and differentiates one ethnic group from the other.

In each of the three ethnic homelands of the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria, every ethnic group uses its native language for transaction. In this case, in Igboland, Igbo language is used, in Yorubaland, Yoruba language is also used, and in Hausaland, Hausa language is used for transactions. In each region inhabited and populated by a given ethnic group, such group uses its own natural language as means of transaction. So, for a Non-native of the regions, who intends to trade in any of the regions other than his own native region, he or she must be able to understand and speak the language of the host ethnic region.

So, in Nigeria, Language is not just another means of communication, but above a natural identity, a cultural pride, economic tool, as well as political tool. The Language structure of the Nigerian state, clearly establishes how deep divided and different the people inhabiting the three ethnic geographical homelands are. Like Schwarz said in his write up about Language politics in Nigeria. He maintained that there are two problems in Nigeria with regard to Language and Communication between the various ethnic nations. He reasoned that the differences between indigenous languages keep the people apart, perpetuate ethnic hostilities, weaken national

loyalties, and increase the danger of separatist sentiment. English, which unites the elite of various ethnic groups, divides the elite from the masses (Schwarz 1965: p 39).

In like manner, the late Tai Solarin once said that Nigeria will never really become a nation until the Yoruba can joke in Igbo or Hausa, or the Hausa young man can make the Ibadan damsel blush as she listens to a courting monologue rounded off in a beautiful epigram in her own tongue (Daily Times, Feb.4, 1961, P.5).

Language in Nigeria as a cultural pride defines the attachment each ethnic group feels about their culturally inherited means of communication. Furthermore, the effect of language in the Nigerian society cannot be more decisively explained than when measured through narrations and story lines information. By the use of narratives, one will be able to derive information through a more cordial and relaxed environment. This is as a consequence of the fact, that the narrator of such a story would be doing that under a free and friendly setting. This is also true for the social relationship existing in the environment, as the individual narrator would be unconscious of the fact that the research might use such friendly setting to derive hidden facts about the individual narrators' inner political feelings.

A Hausa man, who trades in Vegetables at the Sabon Gari central Market in Kano Nigeria, attributed his immobile nature in Nigeria to the effect of the many ethnic languages. He recounted how he could not trade in other parts of the country due to language difficulties as well as different cultural environment. He could neither speak Igbo nor was able to speak Yoruba. He decided instead to remain within the Northern region.

So, Language as it functions today in the political environment of Nigeria is used in many diverse ways. Every ethnic group within the State of Nigeria depends largely on its indigenous Language to drive home any sensitive political message to her people. As reiterated before, the absence of a common Language that binds all the ethnic groups within the State of Nigeria is a natural hindrance to the political development of the country. This shut out the chances of a more cohesive political entity.

The Problem of language differences within the Nigerian State created a political environment that meant different things to the different ethnic nationalities. People do not understand the language spoken in other regions and within other ethnic groups. Even politicians at the National level do not understand each others' language. A politician from the North neither speaks Yoruba nor understands Igbo Language. The same thing applies to politicians from other ethnic groups.

### **6.2.2. Dilemma of Location and fear for the unknown; adaptation Problem**

In the process, communication and information transformation becomes adulterated, as situations are created. And as a consequence, every statement both Political and non-political are given suspicious interpretation by the contending ethnic nationalities. Like many natives of several Towns and Villages in the Northern region of Nigeria, that responded to the question on the role of native Language in Nigeria's democratic processes. One Alhaji Mahmud Abdullahi; Hausa Man who trades in Vegetables at the Central Market in Kano, reiterated that for the same reason, which prevented him from trading or travelling to other regions, will always shape his political opinion in the country.

The City of Kano is located in the extreme part of Nigeria's northern region. The city was known for commercial activities in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Traders from different parts of Africa came to Kano to transact and engage in trades. He maintained that, he neither speaks nor understands Igbo or Yoruba language or any other existing ethnic language in Nigeria. He said that his decision to stay back in the northern region is based on political reason as well as cultural. He claimed that in the Northern region;

"I will not be forced to understand or adjust my life style, as I would probably be made to, should I decide to live outside my region; and I do not have to learn another Language culture as well as to integrate myself within the cultural environment of a host community"<sup>8</sup>.

Instead he said, an individual who comes to his own environment will be made to adjust himself to the cultural setting of his Islamic define socio-cultural environment.

Another similar story line is that of one Malam Ilyasu Maina, a Federal Civil Servant, who works with a Federal Ministry with a regional Office in Kaduna, another city in the northern region of Nigeria. This individual like many others in the region rejected his transfer to Calabar, a city in the Eastern region. He prefers instead to be transferred to Maiduguri, in Borno State. A Town located at the extreme east end of the northern region, bordering Chad Republic and Northern Cameroon. With a severe environmental condition, Maiduguri is home to many sects and violent Islamic fundamentalists. The religious mayhem in several towns and cities in northern Nigeria was caused by a sect called Boko Haram. This simply means or displays the rejection of the sect of any form of western education. The sect regards western education as evil doctrine. But nevertheless, there are native Christians as well as non native Christians who are resident of the towns and cities within the Hausa-Fulani dominated northern Nigeria.

Though, Calabar has a more favourable environmental condition to support life than Maiduguri, but this individual narrator decided to remain within the fringes of the northern region. Like the man in Kano, Malam Ilyasu Maina cited his possible inability to worship in Calabar as he is used to worship in Kano, the problem of a new language environment, and a different social relationship as a reason to his objection to being transferred to Calabar.<sup>9</sup> But nevertheless, Alhaji Bagudu Usman did not make his dislike to other part of the country out of pretence. He might just be rephrasing what one amongst the foremost Nationalist in Nigeria said shortly after the Independence at the federal Parliament. Anthony Enahoro said as one who comes from a minority tribe, I deplore the continuing evidence in this country that people wish to impose their customs, their languages, and even more their way of life upon the smaller tribes. My people have a language, and that language was handed down through a thousand years of tradition and custom. When the Benin Empire exchanged ambassadors with Portugal, many of the new Nigerian languages of today did not exist. How can they now, because the British brought us together, wish to impose their language on us (Schwarz 1965: pg 41-42).

In a questionnaire interview conducted as part of this study in the three case study areas, 15 participants out of a total 24 respondents who participated in the interview remarked that language differences placed a limitation to their ability to change their

location and residency, as it will disorganise their psychological state of life (See Table 6.5 below). Then when one goes to other regions inhabited by other ethnic nationalities, there is a presence of a totally different mindset with regard to language and politics, as well as social and cultural heritage of a host community.<sup>10</sup>

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree? Aggregate of randomly selected Respondents in Enugu, Abeokuta and Kano:24						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Cultural differences as depicted by ethnic identity, solidarity and loyalty is responsible for the political backwardness of Nigeria	2	2	3	4	7	6
Nigeria is living on a borrowed time and on a diminishing Space.	2	3	3	9	4	3
High rate of electoral frauds and corrupt practices in the country's Politics are attributes of cultural differences.	12	2	3	3	0	4
The issues that tend to divide the ethnic nations in Nigeria are far more than the issues that they hold in common.	1	2	3	8	10	0
Religious differences will forever remain as part of political equation in Nigeria.	1	2	0	15	6	0
The language problem does not encourage me to move to another part of the country.	1	2	2	9	6	4

Table 6.4 showing the responses of the participants in the questionnaire interview (Source Okoro 2011)

8. Alhaji Mahmud Abdullahi is a trader at the famous Sabon Gari Market in Kano. He was responding to a question during the Field Research of this Author.

9. Malam Ilyasu Maina is a Civil servant working with a Federal Ministry in Kano.

10. Focus-Group Interviews in Enugu, Abeokuta and Kano 2009.



### 6.3. **Ethnic Loyalty and Politics in Nigeria.**

Neither an individual of Igbo extraction, Yoruba, nor Hausa-Fulani stock believed that his ethnic identity can possibly be replaced by any other identity or point of reference. Yes they live side by side with each other. Yes trade with each other, and owned business outlets side by side with each other. Yes they reside partially side by side with each other. But the identity divide remains a strong point of divergence or non reconcilable point in both political, and in social relationship between the Igbo, the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria.<sup>11</sup>

### 6.4. **Faith, Beliefs and Politics in Nigeria.**

As a matter of individual choice, religious issues often dominate the political landscape, whenever it is national election period. It has become a source of group identity for the contending ethnic nationalities. The ethnic nationalities now use religious affiliation as a factor in the consideration of political dealings in the country. Irrespective of ethnic identity, anybody identified as a Nigerian even outside the geographical area of Nigeria, is known as a religious person. But in terms of politics, the strong passion for religion as evidently displayed by the people has positive as well as negative effects. There is a strong emotional attachment to religion in Nigeria, and that is not just within a single ethnic nationality, it cuts across especially the Hausa-Fulani, and Igbo ethnic nationalities. The Hausa-Fulani block always uses their Islamic religious connection to perfect their political games. As Muslims, the Hausa-Fulani block without any pretence, always prefer an administration headed by a Muslim. This is frequently brandished each time a political question arises in the country, especially with regard to North-South candidacy. But then, it is not just the religious clergies who are pushing for religious defined democratic politics in Nigeria; however religious leaders are mostly the ones at the front burner of the demand.

A given example is that of Osun State. A federal state located in the Yorubaland of South West Nigeria. Ahead of the 2011 elections, Islamic leaders in the federal states within the Yoruba land, of South West Nigeria, emphasised religion as a major factor in the choice of the next chief executive of the state. This simply restates the obvious in the circumstances that bedevilled politics in Nigeria. As it is within the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern section of Nigeria, so it is partially in the Yorubaland in the

South West of the Country. Most people do not make political request without some elements of religious consideration attached to such demands. The President

General of the league of Imams in the federal states within Yorubaland of South West Nigeria, Sheik Mustapha Ajisafe, during one of his meetings with the governor of a state in the region, requested that the outgoing Governor should ensure that a Muslim succeeds him in the 2011 election.<sup>12</sup>

It is no longer a hidden secret that most people would rather use religion as a political tool in selecting a Party candidate, instead of working hard and campaigning for the emergence of a service minded candidate, not minding the religious leaning of the individual. People want good things for their states, but nobody feels so responsible to help out or to engage in activities capable of lifting his state. Most people also want good things, but only for themselves, and not for everybody within the society.

As leaders of the people, the political demands of the Islamic Clerics should have been to ensure that any individual so selected must be someone; whose programmes would bring sustainable development to the state. Indeed nobody would be against the emergence of a Muslim candidate, but such a person must first declare his intention and sell his candidacy to the people. The individual needs to convince the electorate and by telling them the reason why they should cast their ballots for him or her.<sup>13</sup> But on the democratic principles, what should be utmost importance must not be the religious leaning of would-be successor to an office or candidate but his acceptability, competence and how he would be able to lift the society through well-meaning programmes.

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11. Dr Saleh Dauda, Senior Lecturer, Department of History, University of Abuja, Interviewed 07/07/2009

12. Newspapers report. See Daily Independent Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition. 16/05/2010, [www.independentngonline.com](http://www.independentngonline.com)

13. Olagunsoye Oyinlola is a former Governor of Osun State, and current National Secretary of Peoples Democratic Party, see Daily Independent Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition. 16/05/2010. [www.independentngonline.com](http://www.independentngonline.com)

### **6.5. Dilemma of Ethnic Solidarity, Political Relations and democratic Politics in Nigeria.**

In a society separated in many ways by different natural features, the chances for political cooperation become questionable. The Nigerian State provides a thorny political environment so difficult to predict. The three ethnic groups differ in many ways, and so relationship between them becomes segregated. Each ethnic nation always tried to outplay the other or to form an alliance with another ethnic nation.

#### **(i) The Igbo – Hausa-Fulani and Political alliance in Nigeria**

The Political arena of Nigeria has for many years been dominated by people of the three ethnic groups understudy. As it is, no single ethnic group does control the political or administrative machinery of the Nigerian state without the solid alliance of one other ethnic group. This kind of political nomenclature was a legacy bequeathed to the country by her founding fathers. As was discussed already, the post independence political arrangement created a situation that has lasted till this present dispensation.

None of the political arrangements or administrative networks was done with the idea of ethnic solidarity. None was done with the aim of ethnic unity. Every political arrangement is done out of necessity, and not on the basis of solidarity. Political convenience is the hallmark of every political action or arrangement. Since no ethnic group trusts each other, it becomes expedient for a political machinery to build coalition with certain political groups within other societies, with the sole aim of capturing power at the centre.

With the prevalent ethnic hatred running within the three tribal groups in Nigeria, the level of solidarity between the ethnic nations under review cannot in any way be considered to be cordial. The ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba are poles apart, separated on many fronts. There is no single sign of inter-marital relationship between the people of Igbo ethnic extraction and the Hausa-Fulani. There is no possibility that each will cease to regard the other as an entirely different human species. There is a great deal of mistrust running across the three ethnic nationalities. As reviewed through the participants responses in a question

about the existence of trust between the peoples of the ethnic nationalities under study (See Table 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7 below).

How much do you trust each of the following types of people? No of Respondents in Enugu: 30						
A		Not at all	Just a little	I trust them somewhat	I trust them a lot	Don't know
B	People who shares same religion with you	0	8	12	10	0
C	People from other religions	1	18	8	3	0
D	People from your own ethnic group [or region]	0	5	19	6	0
E	People from other ethnic groups	22	4	2	0	2

Table 6.5 showing participants responses from a questionnaire in Enugu (adapted from Afrobarometer with modification 2003)

How much do you trust each of the following types of people? No of Respondents in Kano: 18						
A		Not at all	Just a little	I trust them somewhat	I trust them a lot	Don't know
B	People who shares same religion with you	0	2	4	12	0
C	People from other religions	7	5	3	0	3
D	People from your own ethnic group [or region]	0	2	4	12	0
E	People from other ethnic groups	7	3	6	0	2

Table 6.6 showing participants responses from a questionnaire in Kano (adapted from Afrobarometer with modification 2003)

How much do you trust each of the following types of people? No of Respondents in Abeokuta: 20						
A		Not at all	Just a little	I trust them somewhat	I trust them a lot	Don't know
B	People who shares same religion with you	4	5	7	2	2
C	People from other religions	3	2	8	6	0
D	People from your own ethnic group [or region]	2	5	10	3	0
E	People from other ethnic groups	0	11	5	2	2

Table 6.7 showing participants responses from a questionnaire in Abeokuta (adapted from Afrobarometer with modification 2003)

The tables above convey extracted responses from individuals within the three case study areas. The opinions of the participants can be said to represent a general consensus on how each ethnic group views another ethnic nationality. In Enugu, 19 participants agreed that they trust people from their ethnic group somewhat, and 12 out of 30 participants submitted that they trust people of the same religion with them somewhat. But a total of 22 participants out of 30 respondents submitted that they do not trust people of other ethnic nationalities.

In Kano as well, 12 out of 18 participants agreed that they trusted people who share the same religious faith with them, while 7 respondents from the 18 participants confirmed that they cannot trust people who hails from another ethnic nationality as well as people from other regions in the country. At the same time, 12 respondents out of 18 participants agreed that they trusted people who shared the same ethnic identity with them.

In Abeokuta the information derived showed the same trend. According to the chart on table 6.3, it is noticed that 10 respondents from a total of 20 participants agreed that they trusted people from their own ethnic group as against just 2 respondents from the same number of participants who said that they do not trust people that belong to any other ethnic nationality in the country. However, 11 respondents submitted that they trust people from other ethnic groups little, but 8 and 7 respondents said that they trusted people from other religions and also people that shared the same religion with them respectively.

Indeed, the three tables point out one among the dilemmas that has bedevilled the Nigerian political environment. As it is rumoured and confirmed within the local populace, so does it also thrive within and among the political class. Politically, trust has been and remain a scarce and essential commodity in the country, particularly among the three contending ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, and this mistrust has become more pronounced between the Igbo and the Yoruba. Just as was discussed in previous chapters of 1 and 3, and established by events presented in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

However, despite the lack of trust and ethnic solidarity between the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo; there exist in any case some elements of political alliance between the two nations. Though, the political relationship that thus existed between the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani can be dated back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Nigerian Republic, but it all remained an artificial alliance without solid direction. That is the political period after the Nigerian Independence from Great Britain. At this period, the ethnic nations are dominated and controlled by parties formed through ethnic prisms.<sup>14</sup>

These parties are the NPC, NCNC and the AG. In all the democratic political dispensation in Nigeria, from 1960 to 1983, the dominant party in the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern Nigeria always allied with the dominant political Party in the Igbo nation to form a majority at the federal level. The Yoruba has always played the role of opposition at the federal level. Not until 1999, when Olusegun Obasanjo became elected President of the country, that the Yoruba became involved in the national politics, though not on the strength of the usual regional inclined political party.

Ironically, the political relationship that operates between the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani does not translate to ethnic alliance or understanding. It would be expected that, if such political understanding could work between the two ethnic nations, then there should be no worry as to the possibility of a strong ethnic balance at this period in the political life of the country. But the question of ethnic solidarity in the country is not peculiar to the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani alone. It is not also in any way present in the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba.

## **(ii) The Hausa-Fulani – Yoruba and ethno-political Solidarity in Nigeria.**

The same scenario is discovered as well in the relationship between the Yoruba ethnic nation and the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern Nigeria. In all democratic political dispensations in Nigeria, the Yoruba never formed an alliance with any political Party at the federal level in a bid to control the federal government of Nigeria.

There was never any sort of political alliance between the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba. The only administrative relationship that existed between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani were recorded during the Military regimes. This is also connected to the fact, that the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba jointly fought the Civil war against the Igbo and the rest of Eastern Nigeria, between 1967/1970.

## **(iii) The Yoruba – Igbo and the Problem of ethnic Solidarity in Politics of Nigeria.**

In Politics, it is said that, there is no permanent enemy and there is no permanent friend. But sometimes, development in a society could create a situation of permanent political enemy instead of political friend. In politics, friends could become enemies and enemies could become friends. But this could be possible only on a given political condition, that both candidates are members of a particular political party, or that both are of the same ethnic origin. In Nigeria, the rivalry between the peoples of Yoruba and Igbo extraction dated back to pre-independence years of Nigeria. Like NCNC said after reviewing the records of other two existing political parties at the time. The party questioned by asking;

“Where was the Action Group, which now poses as the champion of Nigeria Independence, during the early and bitter periods of this national struggle? Surely it was in the womb of its tribalistic mother and today it is making a devilish bid to reap where it did not sow”<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly, the NCNC did not make the same categorical statement against the northern based NPC. The nature of politics played by the nationalists from both sides created an atmosphere that has lasted to this day. Like Professor Ezeani rightly pointed out that,

“The Yoruba are known politically and otherwise to be people who say one thing and do the opposite”<sup>16</sup>

He argued further that, the Yoruba are unsteady set of people. They are difficult to be trusted with any kind or form of agreement. The political, ethnic and intellectual rivalry existing between the two nations of Igbo and Yoruba began after the coming of the British into today's Nigeria. There is no existing record telling about any communication or relationship between the Yoruba and the Igbo before the arrival of the British.

From the arrival of the colonialist to mid 1964, there was strong political rivalry between the Yoruba controlled Action Group, and the more Igbo or Eastern dominated NCNC. At this period, the NCNC controlled a substantial number of Parliamentary Seats at the Western Regional Assembly. But not until 1964 – 1966; and that was when the Yoruba introduced for the first time the controversial Cross Carpeting at the Assembly. It was at that time the true nature of Yoruba political philosophy clearly emerged in the Nigerian political scene<sup>17</sup>.

Then between 1979 and 1983, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) under the Leadership of Late Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, and the Unity Party of Nigerian (UPN) under the leadership of Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, there was no single element of political collaboration between the two parties and also between the two ethnic groups. As it was in the 1960s, the UPN still retained the toga of a Yoruba Party, with the sole aim of articulating and propagating Yoruba political agenda. At the end of the election, it was the NPP and the NPN that formed a coalition Government, leaving the UPN as an Opposition Party at the National level. As expected, during 1979 general election the UPN won all the federal States in the Yoruba Western region of the country. But the party could not win any State outside the Yoruba ethnic homeland. According to Professor Ezeani,

“The development and dimension of politics in the Yorubaland demonstrated deeply how sectional and ethnic conscious the Yoruba are”<sup>18</sup>.

He questioned the reason behind the fact, that each time the Yoruba people are not at the vantage positions in government, then they intend to rally around a political



party that is Yoruba oriented. In the same vein, one of the staunch members of the defunct NCNC, Ambassador Mathew Mbu reacted historically, when interviewed by a reporter on the state of politics in Nigeria. He maintained that;

“Chief Awolowo never pretended and I have a lot of respect for him. He never for once pretended that he was a true nationalist. He was a true Yoruba leader, Simplicita. And he never in any way felt ashamed about it, Yoruba for Yoruba, Hausa for Hausa and Igbo for Igbo; that was the way he felt and he never flinched”<sup>19</sup>

The multiplier effect of Chief Awolowo’s political philosophy is being reinvented by some of the present day Yoruba political Leaders. Though, its no longer on the old political Platform of Action Group or UPN, rather it is branded as Action Congress of Nigeria. Those who control the party in the South west region of the country are all Students of Chief Awolowo’s School of democratic politics. Nevertheless, they did this with some sort of political embellishment. They are trying to build a party that has the Yoruba Interest as her nucleus into a national party. This method could be described as a disguised way of creating a party that is more or less national by outlook but regional and ethnic by philosophy. In this line, the leadership of the Action Congress of Nigeria, under Chief Bisi Akande, while on Campaign tour of Ekiti State for the April 2011 national election said that,

“but we’re not Labour Party because the real Obafemi Awolowo party in the South West is ACN, the party with same ideology of Pa. Adekunle Ajasin, Adebayo Adefarati and, of course, Bola Tinubu. The only way to get the kind of government currently in Lagos today is to vote ACN, not the party that paraded betrayers of these great men of Yoruba land that have made us proud and pacesetters in all sectors of life”<sup>20</sup>.

The statement of the party further reinforced the argument that the Yoruba always play ethnic minded politics in Nigeria. For these leaders, it does not matter to them, if other ethnic group interests are relevant or not, what to them that matters most, is the idea that, whenever one of their own is not at the helm of affairs in the Presidency, then they have every cause to retreat and defend their ethnic interest in the country. But to disprove the argument of the party leaders who tried to project the party as a national one, several senior officials of the party in other states have abandoned the party, thereby accusing the party of promoting and projecting ethnic agenda, instead

of the national party it was meant to be. This fact led Alhaji Aminu to resign his membership of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), when he declared that,

“Prior to the 2011 general elections, my belief, as a committed member of the ACN, was that, here is a party that can check some of the excesses of the ruling PDP, particularly in the North where I come from. I feel the party does not have what it takes to become a true national party. It is and will remain a regional party that has the interest of only South-West at the expense of the Nigerian nation”<sup>21</sup>. □

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14. Dr Iro. I. Uke. is a Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Abuja, Interviewed 02/06/2009.

15. See Frederick A.O. Schwarz, (1965), *Nigeria, The Tribes, The Nations, or The Race: The Politics of Independence*, p.104

16. Emmanuel O Ezeani is a Professor of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsuka. Interviewed 07/11/2010.

17. See Ambassador Mathew Mbu, Vanguard Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition, 12/12/2009, [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com)

18. Emmanuel. O. Ezeani is a Professor of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Interviewed 26/06/2009

19. See Ambassador Mathew Mbu, Vanguard Newspaper, Nigeria, Online Edition, 12/12/2009, [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com)

20. See Daily Independent Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition, 04/03/2011, [www.independentonline.com](http://www.independentonline.com)

21. Alhaji Nasiru Aminu was a former Chairman of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) Bauchi State, ([www.nationalmiroonline.net](http://www.nationalmiroonline.net), Wed 28.12.2011, Online Edition.

## Chapter 7

### **7. Ethno-Political divide: the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani of Nigeria.**

The cultural dichotomy that existed between the three ethnic nations of the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria is derived from the very fact that the people of these nationalities do not see nor regard each other as the same. Everything that happened in the system is either politicised or given ethnic colour and interpretation. Constitutional interpretation or lay-down rules are hardly or are never consulted before people who feel aggrieved or short-changed would begin to point accusing fingers.

The death of the former President of Nigeria, Umaru Musa Yar Adua, which resulted in the making of the Vice President, Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan the substantive President witnessed series of political intrigues. That the Vice President is a non Northerner played a very serious role in his confirmation as the President of Nigeria. The Northerners had insisted that, the Late President was not incapacitated, and so there was no need to declare him unfit to rule. But then, issue that was to be a constitutional one, turned out to become ethnic and political. It was not actually based on the premise of constitutional qualification; but rather on the argument that the position of the President was for the North. The idea of competence, ability to lead the country responsibly was ignored.

Another problem remains the resolve of the President Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan to contest the 2011 presidential election. It created problems within the ruling political party. In fact, the problem created political animosity between the politicians from the Northern region, who are also members of the ruling party, and the President and his own Supporters. It also created religious problems between the Christians and the Muslims in the North. Indeed, an issue that was purely a party problem became overnight a national issue. This goes on to show how divisive constitutional issues could be in the country, as most are interpreted to be ethnic or regional agenda.

### **7.1. Geographical divide and Political Responsibilities between the Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa.**

The division of Nigerian State through geographical factors, and as represented by the ethnic and tribal groups in the country, and as represented in map 3.1, and map 3.8 in chapter 3 of this study is a phenomenon that defies every political arrangement. It is a natural creation for the fact that, it was not a man made structure, but a development not wished by any of the ethnic nations. And because, it is a natural endowment, it thus present tough political dilemma for the people. This is so, as it has been a difficult journey trying to balance the political structure.

The division into East, West and North provides a vehicle of identity for the people within these regions. Besides, the regions are inhabited by different people with different natural features. These features ranged from language, historical origin and myths about how each group emerged, traditional heritage, environmental features, and social relationships. As noted before the very fact that the Igbo, the Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani inhabited the divided portions of the country proved that they are separated from each other before they were put together in 1914 by the British colonial administration through the policy of amalgamation. The geographical division of the people created for the country problem of national political irresponsibility in the system. Politics is being played and considered based on these established differences. Every individual, either politically active or politically passive depended largely on the solidarity of the people from his ethnic group.

This scenario resulted in people carrying with them the political sympathy, and demands of the people within their geographical area. An individual appointed to head any governmental agency will definitely want to create an impact within his electoral constituency. Most believes that such an opportunity provide them an avenue to political stardom, as they will always try to solicit for acceptance during balloting by falling back to their previous service to the community make case for re-election, or for another service opportunity.

In summary, very few and indeed insignificant number of politicians in Nigeria go into politics with the aim or mission to serve the general interest of the country. This is

irrespective of ethnic identity. The general norm among the politicians is that most of them profess and proclaim that the interest of their Electoral constituencies is what form their decision to go into politics, but in private, most of them will make it clear that, they are going there to better their economic as well as their political status and relevance within the society.

At the national level issues bordering on how to make life more meaningful to the ordinary masses, and also, how to make government appear more accessible to the public remained a non issue. As mentioned already, the ethnic groups do not have any trust vis-à-vis each other. There is no belief that an individual from a certain ethnic group could represent effectively the overall interest of another ethnic group within the political arrangement in Nigeria. In this regard, Ndolo remarked that,

“the general practice is that each ethnic group must be represented by an individual from such group and not someone from another ethnic nationality, who do not know how sensitive some national issues could be to the very ethnic group the individual might want to represent”<sup>1</sup>.

The argument here is that, it is an established trend by the ethnic groups not to allow any mix in terms of political representation within their homelands. But then, the Problem is not that of quality representation, but the situation is purely that of ethnic intolerance. Many fear that, if such political chance should be allowed or created, then it may eventually lead to denial of chances and opportunities on the side of the Natives. Obasi Igwe once said that,

“even if a political party should present an individual of a different ethnic origin to contest an election in another ethnic region, it is very certain that such a person will loose woefully in the election”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ike S Ndolo is a Professor of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Interview on 07/12/2010

2. Obasi Igwe, is a Professor of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Interview on 01/11/2010

It is also a known fact that no political party will field a non Native in an election and expect to win. The Yoruba do not see any person of Igbo extraction as equally the same as a Yoruba.

There is always the notion that the individual is not part of the Yoruba lineage, and for that will some day depart to his fathers' ethnic homeland. This is irrespective of the location or area in question. It does not matter, if it is in a village or in any of the big cities in the country. Whatever political position occupied by a non-indigene in any of the three ethnic homelands is given out of political patronage, and not won through ballot. Such offer is usually given to create artificial political accommodation, and to prepare the way for electoral acceptance in the future elections.

In the just concluded Election of 2011, the ruling party in Lagos, the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) did not consider it necessary to allocate any Parliamentary Seat to the Igbos resident in Lagos. Though, according to demographers' estimation, the people of Igbo extraction consist of about 45 percent of the total population of Lagos. Not minding the fact that the people of Igbo extraction hold and control the economy of Lagos, there is not any atom of political consideration on the part of the Yoruba, who claimed to be the owners of Lagos. And Lagos being a one party state, other political parties existed only as shadows. The Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) controls both the executive arm of the government, as well as the total control of the Legislature.

This also brings to light the question of effective representation, as desired by the community. Most Yoruba who responded during Field research work claimed that, no matter how well a non native might mean for the community he intends to represent, such a person cannot in all sincerity declare allegiance to the community. Many also believe that, the individual cannot be held accountable for non performance. They reasoned that such an individual could chose to relocate to his ancestral Homeland. Then, when this happens, the Community will be at loss.

### **7.1.2. Horizontal Dilemma: Political Domination and Marginalisation.**

In democratic politics, it is agreed that democracy is a game of numbers. The more number of people an individual or a registered political party is able to draw to its columns the more chances such an individual or a political party stands to win an electoral contest. Marginalisation is a common word in Nigeria. But the meaning attached to it depends largely on the individual making use of it, as well as the circumstances warranting the usage.

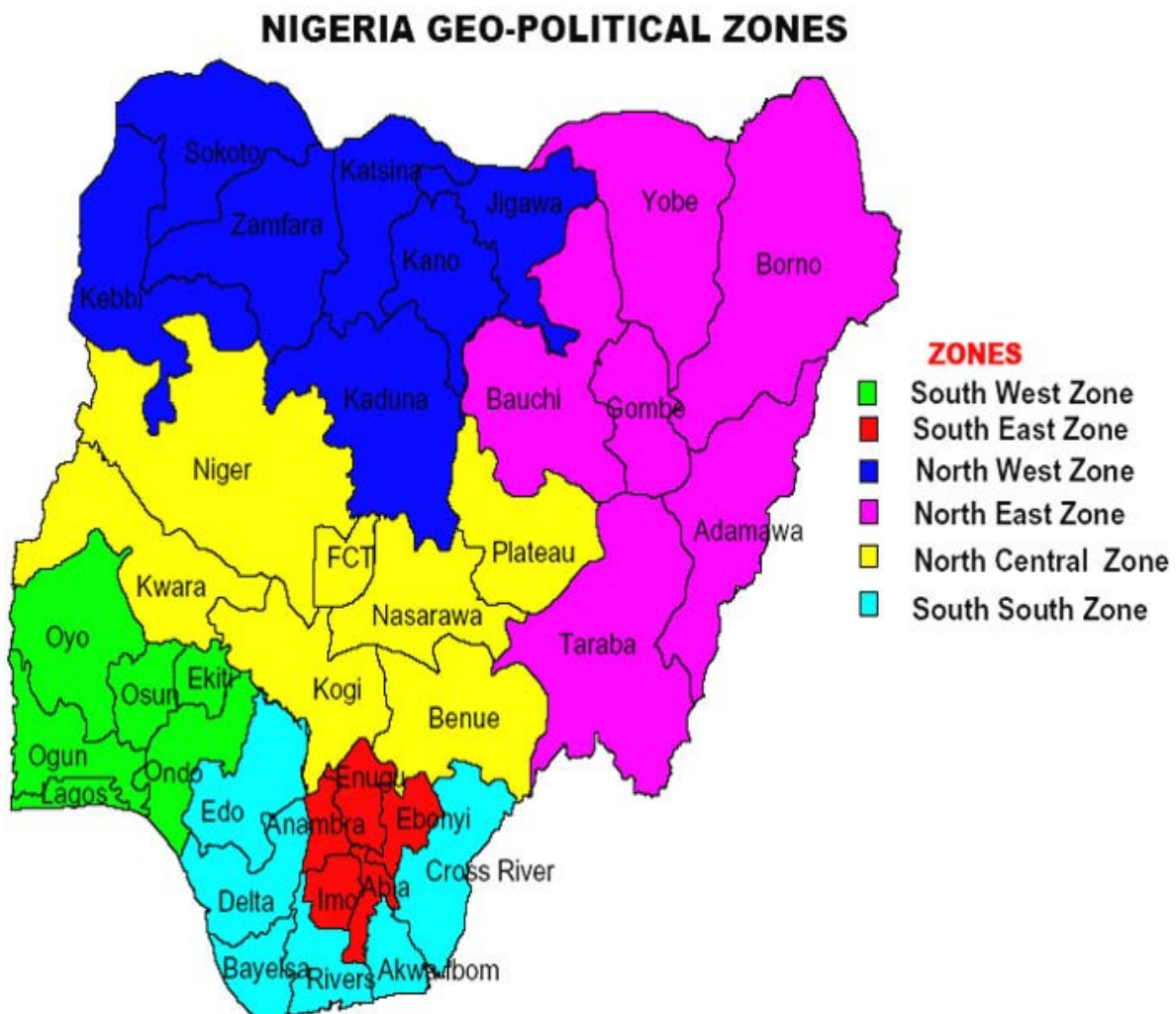
Political domination is an accusation very common in every political discourse in Nigeria. In some cases, political domination refers to the political division of the country into two parts, the northern region and the southern region. But the irony of it all is that while the northern part is treated and regarded as one whole community, the Southern part is further divided into two different parts of Western region and eastern region. The political division of the southern region into two parts significantly affects the fortunes and unity of the side during national elections against the northern region.

In this regard, the Yoruba complained about the political domination of the Hausa-Fulani led Northern region, the Igbo also lament about the domination of the area by the other two ethnic regions of Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani. The Igbo always based their argument on the fact that, all available high and sensitive political offices are routinely shared between individuals from the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba ethnic groups. So, the domination of the sensitive political Offices by other ethnic groups placed the Igbo as a marginalised group. This is the argument of many people of Igbo extraction who contributed to this study.

But looking at the records on the ground, it was discovered that the Igbo, as well as the Yoruba have been politically short-changed in some ways. Structural arrangements in the country point to Imbalance in the system. Each geopolitical Zone has average of 6 States each, but only the core Igbo has 5 federal states. The shortfall in the number of federal states in the ethnic homeland of the Igbo reduces the amount of federal funds that could have accrued to the region. It has also reduced the number of federal Institutions, like Universities, federal government

agencies, and also employment in the federal ministries through the process of federal character and Quota system and other essential facilities that could have been located in the region.

The people of Igbo extraction believe that the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba are collaborating to short change the Igbo by not accepting the argument of adding another federal state in the Igbo homeland to bring the Zone at par with other geopolitical Zones (See map 7.1 below). So, majority of the indices proved the Igbo right by their protest against being marginalised through a system designed to dominate their ethnic group by other groups in the country.



Map 7.1 showing the six geopolitical zones as created in 2005 by the Constituent Assembly of Nigeria (source. [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com))



The Yoruba, though appear satisfied with the situation of development in the country, especially during the 2 terms of Olusegun Obasanjo's presidency. The Yoruba stood at the period as the greatest beneficiary of Nigerian inconsistencies. The Yoruba do not complain or protest the unfair structure of the country, rather they choose only to protest, when any government initiatives seems not to favour them. Within the confines of Nigeria's political structure, the Yoruba usually feel threatened when the structure of the government in power falls out of their favour. At the time of Olusegun Obasanjo administration, the people of Yoruba extraction never felt dominated by the power equation in the country, but after tenure of their tribesman, they began to complain of being marginalised in the affairs of the country. However, as the table (7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8) below reveals, there is actually lopsidedness in the ethnicity of those that occupied certain positions in government and in the government Agencies. And here are the samples of key national offices and the geopolitical region of their leadership:

Top 6 positions in the Government of Nigeria						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	Vice President	Senate President	None	None	Secretary to the Government of the Federation	President
2	Speaker House of Representative					
3	Chief Justice of the Federation					

Table 7.1 showing the distribution of the 6 top offices in Nigeria (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country, or somebody of Yoruba extraction.

The Nigerian Legislature.						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	House Speaker	Senate President	None	None	Deputy Senate President	None
					Deputy Speaker House of Representative	

Table 7.2 showing the distribution of the top offices in the National Parliament (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country, or somebody of Yoruba extraction

Bureaucracy in the Government						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	None	None	Head of the Civil Service of the Federation	None	Secretary to the Government of the Federation	Chief of Staff to the President
					Chairman Federal Civil Service Commission	Chairman Police Service Commission
						National Security Adviser

Table 7.3 showing the distribution of top administrative heads in the government (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country, or somebody of Yoruba extraction

Federal executive Commissions of the Government						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	INEC	Federal Character Commission		None	Federal Civil Service Commission	Police Service Commission
		Federal Judicial Service Commission			Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission	
		National Population Commission				

Table 7.4 showing the distribution of offices at the federal commission level (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country, or somebody of Yoruba extraction

Security / Anti-Corruption Agencies						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	Inspector General of Police	EFCC	Code of Conduct Bureau	None	None	ICPC

Table 7.5 showing the distribution of offices security and Anti-Corruption Agencies according to zones (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country or somebody of Yoruba extraction.

Top Corporations and Heavy Budget Agencies in the Country.						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	PTDF	NNPC	Tertiary Education Trust Fund	None	PHCN/NERC	NDDC
			UBEC		National Identity Management Commission	MDGs Office
			National Health Insurance Scheme		FRSC	NIMASA
					FERMA	

Table 7.6 showing the distribution of offices in the top National Corporations (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is nobody from the south-west of the country, or somebody of Yoruba extraction

Education Regulatory/Funding/ Representing Agencies						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
1	NBTE	National Mathematical Centre	NCCE	JAMB	NECO	NUC
		ETF			NERDC	
		UBEC				
		UNESCO				

Table 7.7 showing the distribution of offices in the Education Agencies according to zones (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is only one person from the south-west, and of Yoruba extraction.

Revenue Related (Generation and management) Agencies.						
	North-West	North-Central	North-East	South-West	South-East	South-South
	Nigerian Customs Service	Auditor General of the Federation	None	Accountant General of the Federation	Chairman RMAFC	Chairman FIRS

Table 7.8 showing the distribution of offices in the Revenue Agencies according to zones (Source Okoro 2011)

- ❖ There is only one person from the south-west and of Yoruba extraction.

As one can see from the above tables, the people of Yoruba extraction in the south-west of the country did not appear in tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 as well as in table 7.6. The Yoruba of south-west Nigeria appeared only in tables 7.7 and 7.8. But the reason for the structure as revealed cannot be easily defined. But this kind of situation has left many people of Yoruba extraction in utter bewilderment, confused but kept lamenting for the anomaly to be rectified, either constitutionally or through executive fiat. The issue of marginalisation cannot be said to be directed at a particular ethnic nationality, because the above tables did prove the argument to be correct.

### **7.1.3. Democracy and the Nigerian Society: Political Stratification influenced by Ethnic Mindset.**

In Nigeria, the region or ethnic identity of an individual tells more, if such individual would be acceptable or somewhat tolerated by people from the opposite ethnic nationality. As earlier stated in the course of this work, there is no single ethnic group in Nigeria with a corresponding identity or cultural affinity with others. The prevailing spirit of ethnic differences between the three groups presented a loose national consciousness. It is loose in the sense that, everybody feels for himself and his immediate community, without a corresponding interest for other parts of the society.

The three groups are both internally and externally separated from each other. The Ordinary people, who one can describe as passive politicians do not connect to each other across the regions as one people that share the same political goal. Depending on the side one locates oneself; people are not accorded the same political treatment. In the Yorubaland of western Nigeria, neither anybody of Igbo extraction nor anyone of Hausa-Fulani can contest for any elective political office and be voted for. It applies

also both in Igboland, and within the Hausa-Fulani homelands. The people are internally stratified. The cultural barrier within the groups is profoundly the effect of age long animosity existing among the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani.

The politicians are not different from the rest of the populace of every ethnic region. Both the people in active politics as well as those, who do not regard politics as a profession interact, share emotions together, and attend to both social and cultural events together and are motivated under the same culturally enshrined conditions. So, the internal political indoctrination of the people culturally limited the chances of any In-group believing in the capacity of an outsider to represent the interest of the group within a larger political setting.

However the single act of making references to any individual through the ethnic affiliation of such a person is another point of a stratified political environment. People are identified only by their ethnic origin; this is irrespective of where such individual resides, or what the person is doing within the host community. According to information generated from the field during the course of this study, it was discovered that people have very little in common, and individuals from the three ethnic nationalities rarely discuss politics with each other. The table 7.9 below confirmed the opinions of some respondents who participated in a questionnaire interview. The interview was administered in the three towns used as case study areas.

How Comfortable are you with People from these Ethnic Groups or Tribes? No of Resp 72 (Questionnaire in Enugu)				
	Good	Fairly Good	Bad	Never
Hausa-Fulani	4	6	13	49
Yoruba	6	27	32	7

Table 7.9 showing responses of the participants in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011)

How Comfortable are you with people from these Ethnic Groups or Tribes? No of Resp 44 (Questionnaire in Abeokuta)				
	Good	Fairly Good	Bad	Never
Igbo	13	19	8	4
Hausa-Fulani	4	6	23	11

Table 7.10 showing responses of the participants in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

How Comfortable are you with People from these Ethnic Groups or Tribes? No of Resp 54 (Questionnaire in Kano)				
	Good	Fairly Good	Bad	Never
Igbo	8	13	17	16
Yoruba	5	10	18	17

Table 7.11 showing responses of the participants in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

The tables above exposed the internal feelings harboured by each ethnic nationality against the other. Some respondents in Enugu expressed an uneasy feeling about the behaviour of particularly the Yoruba people. In table 7.9 above, only 6 respondents from a total of 72 participants agreed that they feel comfortable with the Yoruba people, and a total of 7 respondents from the same 72 participants submitted that they are never comfortable with a Yoruba person, while 27 respondents accepted that they are fairly comfortable with Yoruba people. But compare to the 49 respondents who say that they are never comfortable with the Hausa-Fulani people, as well as the 13 respondents who submitted that their level of comfort ability with the Hausa-Fulani is bad; one would assume that the Igbo are more comfortable with the Yoruba than the people of Hausa-Fulani extraction.

In Abeokuta as well as, 13 respondents from the total 44 participants agreed that they are comfortable with the Igbo, but a total of 19 respondents from the overall participants say that they are fairly comfortable with the Igbo, while 4 respondents say that they are never comfortable with an Igbo person. But compare to 34 respondents who submitted that they feel bad and that they are never comfortable with a Hausa-Fulani person, as well as the 3 respondents who agreed that they are just fairly comfortable with a Hausa-Fulani, it would be deduced that the Yoruba find it more comfortable to relate with an Igbo person than a Hausa-Fulani person.

But in the city of Kano, the reverse is the case, as 13 respondents out of 54 participants agreed that they are fairly comfortable with the Igbo. However, 10 out of the 54 participants submitted that they are fairly comfortable with the Yoruba. The revelation showed that the level of comfort ability on the part of the Hausa-Fulani towards the Yoruba and the Igbo is higher than the results obtained from the two ethnic nationalities. But then, 35 respondents from 54 participants in Kano admitted that they feel bad or that they are never comfortable with the Yoruba, while 33

respondents from the same 54 participants submitted that they feel bad or that they are never comfortable with the Igbo. As said before, these results show how divided people from the three ethnic nationalities are.

There is also the Problem associated with Name of any aspiring individual. The cultural endowment within the three ethnic nationalities created the Institution of Name giving. The Hausa-Fulani has a distinct Name calling that is typical of people from that environment. When an individual with a strange Name appears on the political scene, then such individual is easily detected. When such is the case, then the failure of that individual and his party may have been concluded before the commencement of the election.

### **The Effect of Ethnic Agenda and democratic Politics in Nigerian: the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani.**

Due to the fact that none of the three ethnic nationalities is strong enough to dominate and dictate to other two; each then tries to outplay each other at the level of national politics in the country. The ultimate agenda of each of the three contending ethnic nationalities is to produce the President of the country, and as well as to control the national government. None of the ethnic groups ever placed premium on the nature of social amenities within their regions. Infrastructural facilities are usually relegated to the back bench. To seek for amenities that would ameliorate the suffering of the common people is never considered as the first option. Each group always employs all the political capital it has within her reach, but when a group fails or realises that it could not win the chance to produce the President, then such ethnic group will turn around to contest for other lesser political positions. But all these are done in a bid to remain politically relevant within the administrative configuration. This development prompted Obioha Nwankwo to say that,

“the general assumption of the members of the three ethnic nationalities has been that, whichever ethnic group that produces the President, stands as the most powerful ethnic group among the three”<sup>3</sup>

The Motivation for most politicians from the ethnic groups is centred on the premise of power and Influence, and not necessarily in a bid to correct the anomalies within the various communities. A Hausa-Fulani does not want an Igbo person rule ahead of him, neither does a Yoruba person subscribe or feel open to the idea of an Igbo person becoming the President. The same scenario is played all over and against other ethnic nationalities.

Even among members of the National Parliament, Bills and other Parliamentary Acts are subjected to ethnic political considerations. Ethnic interest is usually placed above the national internal interest. Decision on certain issues of national implication are never visited or considered. The issue of Sharia Islamic Law as State Law in over 11 States in the northern part of the Country is a case in question. The issue is widely viewed as a “Time Bomb”, because any move against the application, would certainly be resisted by the adherents of Islam.

The absence of any coordinated national political agenda creates a vacuum in the effort to create an enduring democratic environment. Bringing political programmes shaped by ethnic interest to the national level endangers the gradual transformation of the country, politically. The ethnic posturing which every of the three groups are brandishing will in no way reduce the overbearing influence of identity based politics in the country. When asked about their preference for a candidate for the office of the President, the respondents from the three case study areas through questionnaire presented almost similar responses. (See Table 7.12, 7.13, 7.14 below)

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B. (26)			
A. The Politics of “Us and Them” has eroded the values of democracy in Nigeria.		It is better to vote for someone from your Ethnic nation, than to vote for someone, who is from another ethnic group for the office of President.	
Agree very strongly with A	Agree with A	Agree with B	Agree very strongly with B
6	5	12	3
Agree with neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 7.12 showing participants responses as recorded in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011)



Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (19)			
A. The Politics of “Us and Them” has eroded the values of democracy in Nigeria.		It is better to vote for someone from your Ethnic nation, than to vote for someone, who is from another ethnic group for the office of President.	
Agree very strongly with A 1	Agree with A 4	Agree with B 9	Agree very strongly with B Agree with B 5
Agree with neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 7.13 showing participants responses as recorded in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (20)			
A. The Politics of “Us and Them” has eroded the values of democracy in Nigeria.		It is better to vote for someone from your Ethnic nation, than to vote for someone, who is from another ethnic group for the office of President.	
Agree very strongly with A 2	Agree with A 4	Agree with B 8	Agree very strongly with B Agree with B 6
Agree with neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 7.14 showing participants responses as recorded in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

The above derived responses clearly testify that majority of the respondents in the three case study areas showed preference for a candidate who hails from the same ethnic homeland with them. In the case study areas of Kano in the northern party of the country, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani, as well as in Abeokuta in the western part of the country and home of the Yoruba, 2/3 of the respondents accepted that in the case of Nigerian politics, it is better to vote for a candidate who also shares the same ethnic origin with you, than to vote for someone who comes from a different ethnic nationality. That is a clear sign of discontent among the three ethnic nationalities. Though, these views are held individually, and hardly expressed in the public. Even within a given political party, nationally people hide under the pretence of a resolve to build a national coalition, but separately each group plots how to hijack, dominate, or secure a particular political for their ethnic group.

But then, when political parties are formed through the political lens of ethnic ideology, as it is in the case of Action Congress of Nigeria, and the All Progressives Grand Alliance, and some other regional based political parties. And when initiatives

are drawn and pursued for implementation through ethnic consideration as in the case of Sharia Law in majority of the federal states in the northern part of the Country; or when appointment is made to be under the prerogative of identity, and on the expense of qualification, suitability and capability.

At the national level, initiatives are made, sought for and accented to through ethnic designed bargaining. Outcome of governmental initiatives are usually generated through trade off between the federal Parliamentarians from the three ethnic groups. The quest for the control of the Presidential office, as well the other high offices, has remained a product of ethnic political agenda. This has also not been helpful in any way to the democratic effort of the country.

#### **7.1.4. Ethnic Agitations and Democracy in Nigeria**

Democracy entails differences in opinion and leaning, and it also suggests that individuals must not share the same political philosophy. In every little political opportunity, people from the three different ethnic regions in Nigeria always play to support their ethnic agenda and political interest. As discussed above, the desire of the ethnic nationalities to produce the men and the women, who control the affairs of the country, are identity moulded. Coming from different historical backgrounds, and having different political nomenclatures within their different communities, then it is common to believe that with democratic politics, the various ethnic tones will fade away for a more nationalistic tendencies.

After the ruling party, the People Democratic Party denied the Northern region the chance of producing its Presidential Candidate for the 2011 presidential election, there was spontaneous shout and cries, which made people to think that the country was under self imposed threat. Certain members of the ruling Party from the region had strategise to outplay the incumbent President Jonathan Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan and his supporters. But their plan was not successful, and in the process, some of the Northern members of the ruling party organised themselves, and promised to mobilise their folks, so as to reject the President by voting against him and the party during the election proper. However, they succeeded, as the President

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3. Obioha Nwankwo, is a Political Analyst based in Abuja, Interview contacted on 04/12/2010

and the party lost entire core Northern federal states. Though, the President and the party managed to secure the Constitution mandated 25 percent of valid Votes cast in some of the States.

At the end of the election, it was very clear that the event in the ruling party divided the country into two halves. This was proved through the performance of another candidate from the Opposition party, the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). Muhammadu Buhari, who was the Presidential candidate of the Party, was heavily supported by voters in the region alone. Through the massive support of the electorates within the northern region, the former military Head of State, retired Major General Muhammadu Buhari won all the federal states in the core northern region of the country. The agitation of the Hausa-Fulani dominated northern region created division in the political field.

But then, one would ask, why supporting somebody, who is not of core Igbo extraction? Or better still, why are the Igbo supporting the President on the expense of their own collective Interest? However the logic behind the decision to support the President was purely on the basis of solidarity. The people reasoned that the President, like every other Igbo person, belongs to the same Eastern region. This argument was further pushed by campaigners of the President. During the annual World Igbo Conference in Philadelphia, United States of America, Dr. Wolfe Obianire, President Ijaw National Congress, INC, who spoke for President Goodluck Jonathan confirmed him also as an easterner; when he said,

"I do not need to bait the Igbo people; Goodluck Jonathan is from the Eastern Region. Nineteen states were created from the North and they still relate as the Northern Region but they keep telling you zoning is between the north and south. They don't tell you zoning is between North-West and North-Central. They tell you, zoning is between North and South. "Then here I am from the eastern region and you are asking me, what I am getting to the Eastern Region"<sup>4</sup>

Dr Wolfe Obianire went further, when he charged, by exclaiming;

"Goodluck Jonathan is from the Eastern Region. His name is Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan. So, why must he bribe his brothers to get what he wants?"<sup>5</sup>

The above statement fit into the political calculus of many people of Igbo extraction. In the election proper, and as envisaged by many or underestimated by few, the Igbo that happened to be the dominant ethnic group in the eastern region, comprising the South East and the South-South geopolitical Zones mobilised their people, both within the region and outside the region. The People voted massively not necessarily for the party, but for the President, Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan. It was on the belief and strength that the President is one of them, and thus deserved their support to push away the political quest of the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern Nigeria.

The Igbo had been demanding for the chance for somebody of Igbo extraction to emerge as President of the country, but to no avail. Since Goodluck Jonathan himself, hailed from the region, so the entire region views the chance as an opportunity to occupy the Office. Not done yet, the core Igbo of the eastern region keep demanding for the chance to produce the President by the national election in 2015. However, during their campaign for their party primary election, two prominent members and contestants of the party from the northern region agreed on different occasions that, it is high time somebody of Igbo extraction becomes the President of the country. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida once said that,

“after 2015 the presidency will move to the east as I will love to see an Igbo president emerging. My reason for having this desire is to put an end to the polarisation in the country after three years of the civil war in the 70’s. I am optimistic that when a president from the Igbo extraction emerges, and the eastern part of the country which has not had the opportunity of leading the country since the civil war, will now completely feel more Nigerian”<sup>6</sup>.

In the same manner, the Former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, while addressing the members of Enugu State House of Assembly in Enugu stated that,

“I am committed to an Igbo presidency in 2015 to a point of passion. I remain resolutely committed that this zone, be fully reintegrated in Nigeria”<sup>7</sup>.

The former Vice President under the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo 1999 – 2007, went further to say that,

“I am bound to abide by that agreement as it affects our children and grandchildren in the pursuit of national unity,”<sup>8</sup>

It thus proves that there is tacit admittance that somebody of Igbo extraction needs to become the President of the country. Majority of the people Igbo of extraction resident in the two ethnic regions of the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba were convinced that there is political conspiracy between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani against the Igbo. Many of the respondents argued that, despite the number of years they have lived and run business in the communities, where they lived, nobody viewed it necessary to involve them in some aspects of developmental programmes in the localities. They are simply viewed as economic adventurers in their midst. They are not respected, nor have the level opportunities within the indigenes, despite their Wealth and Investment in the economy of their host communities. Like Ezendu Ifediorah lamented, when he said that,

“the last thing a Yoruba person will accept wholeheartedly is to see an Igbo person having a political authority over him”<sup>9</sup>

This individual was reacting to questions on the political relationship between the Yoruba and the Igbo in the present political dispensation. But then, a Yoruba may not have any problem for somebody of Igbo extraction having political authority over him. However such an authority must as a matter of fact emanate from outside the Yoruba homeland. This is for the simple reason that it would be regarded as capitulation on their side, and they would view the individual as a conqueror. For the mere fact that the individual beneficiary is not of Yoruba descent makes it more absurd for their political calculation.

## **7.2. Political Parties and the Role of Politicians in fostering ethnic unity.**

Out of the over 60 registered political parties in Nigeria, there is none without reference to ethnic diversity and unity of Nigeria in her manifesto. But the true aspiration and approach of the politicians, when elected always leave much to be desired. The political parties are supposed to serve as Bridge between the contending ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, but this function has been abdicated by the politicians and their various political parties.

Having emerged from the various ethnic regions, they are very much aware of the problems associated with ethnic bias within the three groups. The parties and their Officials are also deeply aware that democracy is supposed to serve as a channel through which the bitter and secret conspiracy thriving within the political scene could be reduced to a negligible level, if not totally stamped out from the political life of the country.

Though the parties have measures meant to serve as guide to creating national unity. Measures meant to integrate everybody irrespective of ethnic identity. The parties and some politicians remember the need for national unity only when parties conventions approaches. Then people would begin to argue on the need for the parties to consider personalities from the ethnic regions on the basis of reasserting national unity.

Then many individuals, politicians and non active politicians would begin to campaign; suggesting that certain political positions should be reserved or zoned to a particular region and to people of certain ethnic identity. All these are done by the parties and politicians only to generate political sympathy among the populace. But immediately the party conventions and national elections are over, the country returns to status quo.

The whole promises and political hopes preceding the election are forgotten. Those elected usually sit back and concentrate only on how to recoup the resources spent fighting the election. It is observed that talks and promises about measures for the systematic control of ethnic outburst usually die with the conclusion of the elections.

### **7.2.1. Programmes and Party Structure and Policy Implementation.**

Party or no party, Individuals from the three ethnic nationalities always believe that anybody that occupies the Seat of government will as matter of fact develop his own ethnic region, and on the expense of other ethnic nations. It is also assumed that the individual is a representative of his ethnic nation.

When a political party wins an election, such a party does have its own Manifesto or List of Intentions to execute. The Programmes of political parties in Nigeria have no significant differences. This can also be attributed to the fact that majority of the members of other political parties are derived from the ruling party. Issues on Road construction, Housing Accommodation, Employment, Electricity and Energy, Health, and Education always stand as the top priorities of the various parties in the country. However, for any of the desired intents to be realised, depends largely on the party and also the people that formed the majority in the federal government. The implementation of party Intents after election at the National Level is always problematic and one sided. Most times, the intents are overtaken by the zeal to pacify certain groups or certain Interests. But this is often done at the expense and at the detriment of the national political development.

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4. 5. Dr Wolfe Obianire, was the President of the Ijaw National Council, see Vanguard Newspaper Online Edition, 11/09/2010, [www.vanguard.ng.com](http://www.vanguard.ng.com)

6. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida was the former Military President of Nigeria. See Daily Trust Newspapers Nigeria, Online Edition, 12/08/2010, [www.dailytrust.com](http://www.dailytrust.com)

7. Abubakar Atiku, was the former Vice President of Nigeria for 8 years, from 1999 – 2007. See Nigeria Tribune Newspaper, Online Edition, 31/12/2010, [www.tribuneonline.com](http://www.tribuneonline.com)

8. Abubakar Atiku, was addressing the members of Enugu State House of Assembly, see Nigeria Tribune Newspaper, Online Edition, 31/12/2010, [www.tribuneonline.com](http://www.tribuneonline.com)

9. Ezendu Ifediorah is a Political Analyst based in Lagos. Interview conducted on 20/12/2010

### **7.3.1. Ethno-phobia and Submissive Politics between the three Nationalities in Nigeria.**

The absence of dominance between the three ethnic groups that rivalled each other within the Nigerian political space makes every political contest an interesting one. The bias mind that each has for other ethnic group cut across every aspect of human endeavour. It is not restricted to political contest alone. Ethno-phobia is found in schools, churches, Mosques, Restaurants and in every other public place that one can imagine.

In schools, even children at their very low age discriminate against each other on the basis of ethnicity. At first they are distinguished and separated through their names, and then further separated by ethnic origin. However the development of ethnic consciousness of these young lads did not happen by accident. It does emanate from their various homes. Each child is thought to understand that he is of a particular ethnic group and such child is further made to understand that there is a difference and an existing division between the three ethnic nationalities.

When a child is called and asked to identify himself, the first thing to be mentioned is the name and that of the parents. The second thing to be mentioned is the ethnic nationality. In this case, it might be Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa-Fulani. Even though such a child may not have visited his ethnic homeland since birth, but for the fact that he was brought up to believe and to identify with his biological ethnic origin, then there is no other option left to explore. The simple fact that people are identified and distinguished from others through names and language, physical outlook and dressing mode creates the differences in Nigerian society.

Individuals are made by the reality on the ground to accept the situation. People of the host communities, in this case may be the Yoruba, Igbo, or the Hausa-Fulani, do not in any way regard the individual as one among them. Though, some people might blame it on integration, but then, there are two ways to integration within every society.



First is the individual self integration. It is very possible for an individual to integrate himself in the community he found himself, but it is another matter for that individual to be accepted in to such community. So, an individual could integrate himself, but his host community may not as well integrate him. The struggle for political supremacy or relevance somehow created a hostile relationship between the three ethnic groups. Depending on the side one finds himself, the argument is the same. The expression for fear of losing out in the power equation in the country drives the urge for non compromise status of the ethnic groups.

The Hausa-Fulani in their very locality detest anything that has any sort of Yoruba or Igbo colouration. For them, to trade among themselves is not a problem. None of the ethnic groups sees anything dangerous in trading with each other. But the only aspect they reject and abhor is for any individual of another ethnic group to have political control in their ethnic homeland.

Each believed that political power or political authority is an exclusive right of the indigenes alone. Like Samson Akpan, a long time resident in the town of Abeokuta rightly pointed out that,

“a Yoruba, Igbo, or Hausa-Fulani person would without pretence or apology, tell you in your face that you have to go back to your ethnic homeland and contest, if you want any political power or influence. But certainly not in his community”<sup>10</sup>

Every individual wants to protect his ethnic community. Nobody wants to see his ethnic group disadvantaged or short-changed. So, the apprehension noticed in the submission of the various ethnic communities, suggests that the political parties lack the focus and measures needed to bridge the mindset that each has for the other. A Yoruba person sees an Igbo person first as an Igbo and then second as a Nigerian. The Hausa-Fulani sees a Yoruba person first as a Yoruba, and then as a Yoruba. The same applies to an Igbo towards any Hausa-Fulani person. Each is identified through his ethnic community, and not through Nigeria.

Despite the non recognition of their contribution in the development of their host communities, the different ethnic groups, who are resident in other ethnic homelands, have been cooperative and submissive with the political decisions in their host

communities. For instance, in the entire federal states within the Yoruba homeland, the Igbo are the next in population, but the Igbo are not represented in any of the state administrations. Not even within the local communities, the Igbo are not politically considered to be of any constructive assistance. Instead, the Igbo are called upon to vote during the elections. This implies that the Igbo can only vote for people, but at the same time, they are not qualified to be voted for.

Considering political structure within the ethnic communities, the idea of opening the democratic space of the country, is getting narrower everyday. Besides, the political tone emanating from different actors is also not helping towards the relaxation of ethnic mindset. The ultimate interest of most indigenes is to limit the influence of the non natives in their communities. This is aimed at making them remain submissive and to always have the status of economic adventurers, no matter how long any of them might have lived there, or might want to live in the community.

The Phobia as expressed by various ethnic groups is a negation of the true aim of democratic politics. It thus reduces democracy from its universal principles to that of ethnic influenced political exercise in Nigeria. Yes, the political system is called democracy, but then, the citizens do not enjoy equal rights, as people are restricted and denied the chance and opportunity to exercise their democratic right, to vote and to be voted for. The development of democratic political culture in Nigeria is limited by over reliance on ethnic levers in political discourse by the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani.

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10. Samson Akpan was reacting to a question on why non natives are politically rejected by their host communities. Interview conducted on 23/12/2010 in Abeokuta

## Chapter 8.

### 8. **Democracy and Good Governance, the ethnic factor in Nigeria.**

Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria depend largely on the region that an individual comes from. It revolves also on how an individual decides to analyse his political understanding of the Nigerian scene. As one moves from one locality to another, then that individual will begin to see and experience differences in political thought.

Good Governance can be said to be relative. It depends solely on the individual, and how such an individual views it. Good Governance means different things to the different ethnic nationalities within the Nigerian States. It also means different things to different individuals within the three ethnic nations.

In real terms, what represents development and service to an individual may also have a complete different interpretation when presented in another political environment. In development terms, the three ethnic regions did not any way differ from each other. The state of Infrastructures and other basic amenities within the three ethnic regions resemble each other. There are no meaningful infrastructural facilities that one can rely on, in terms of economic development, to boost the lives of the people in their areas.

It does appear as if the politicians from the three ethnic groups shared the same political mentality. Their interpretation of service to the people showed no difference. Before they are elected into any of the political Offices, they usually share everything in common with the people within their communities. But the moment an individual secures the mandate to represent his Constituency under any political arrangement; one will begin to notice gradual changes from the politicians. According to Jack Finni,

“it is so shocking to see somebody you shared so many things in common with before, to suddenly turn around and behave, as if he is a god to be worshipped”<sup>1</sup>

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1. Jack Finni, is a Sociologist based in Lagos, Interview on 08/12/2010

Some people tend to easily forget their background just for the mere excuse that they have been elected to a certain office. A typical Nigerian politician cares most for his personal comfort. The comfort of those whose mandate he is holding means nothing to worry about. Within the Hausa-Fulani community, it was discovered in the course of Information drive for this Thesis, that most of the natives in the area do not have explicit knowledge about the many supposedly developmental projects meant for their localities that did not see the light of day.

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (Questionnaire in Enugu)			
A. Politicians are never to be trusted, because they hardly get connected to people after they are voted into office		B. The elected Politicians are always mindful of their constituencies.	
Agree Very Strongly With A 7	Agree With A 14	Agree With B 3	Agree Very Strongly With B 1
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 8.1 showing respondents responses in Enugu (Source adapted from Afrobarometer 2003 with modification)

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (Questionnaire in Abeokuta)			
A. Politicians are never to be trusted, because they hardly get connected to people after they are voted into office		B. The elected Politicians are always mindful of their constituencies.	
Agree Very Strongly With A 9	Agree With A 7	Agree With B 3	Agree Very Strongly With B 1
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 8.2 showing respondents responses in Abeokuta (Source adapted from Afrobarometer 2003 with modification)

Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement A or Statement B (Questionnaire in Kano).			
A. Politicians are never to be trusted, because they hardly get connected to people after they are voted into office		B. The elected Politicians are always mindful of their constituencies.	
Agree Very Strongly With A 5	Agree With A 10	Agree With B 4	Agree Very Strongly With B 1
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 8.3 showing respondents responses in Kano (Source adapted from Afrobarometer 2003 with modification)

From the information derived through questionnaire interviews with respondents in the three case study areas, it was discovered that the level of displeasure running within the three ethnic nationalities is very alarming. In the town of Enugu, and as represented above in table (8.1), 4 respondents out of every 5 participants condemned very strongly the activities and behaviours of elected politicians toward the electorate. Out of a total 26 respondents who responded to the question about their views towards the elected officials, only 4 participants believe that the elected politicians are doing well in their relationship with their electoral constituencies.

Within the town of Abeokuta as well, respondents showed similar reactions to that obtained in Enugu. Record in table (8.2), which was derived from participants' responses in Abeokuta, showed that 16 respondents out of a total 20 participants viewed the activities of the elected politicians negatively. Like in the town of Enugu, every 4 respondents from 5 participants believe that most of the elected politicians often detached themselves from their electoral constituencies the moment they are elected. Only 4 respondents all together believe that the elected officials are responsive to their electoral constituencies. This implies that, just 1 respondent out of every 5 participants who participated in the questionnaire interview approve the relationship that existed between the elected officials and the electorate within their electoral constituencies.

The result generated in Kano as shown in table (8.3) above present responses that support the results obtained in Enugu (8.1) and Abeokuta (8.2). There is an overwhelming agreement among the respondents that the elected politicians cease to be what they portrayed themselves to represent during the election the moment they are elected into office. A total of 15 respondents from 19 participants in Kano agreed that the elected politicians often separate themselves from the electorate after winning an election. Only a mere 4 respondents from 19 participants are delighted by the activities of the elected politicians in their constituencies. A significant number of those that took part in the questionnaire interviews within the suburb of Kano City, explained that they do not have enough information about the antecedents of the very individual representing their electoral Constituency. They claimed the only single

idea they have about the individual is through his Posters during the election. However the resolve to vote for a Party instead of individuals contributed to this development. Most people within Kano and Abeokuta are die-hard party supporters, who do not necessarily have an idea about the antecedents and programmes of the individual candidate who wants to represent their constituencies. The results obtained from tables 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 could be regarded as an indictment of the politicians by the voters in the three case study areas.

#### 8.1. **Democratic Politics and Service.**

It is an impossible task, perhaps because most Nigerians have been looking for a leader, that is, one archetypical unblemished figure, on whom everyone can depend on to rest the crown and somebody who would then embody the will of the nation. Out of the many politicians and individuals jostling to represent the people at various times and in different political positions, very few of them actually wanted to serve their communities.

Many people do not aspire for political offices on the sole desire to render selfless service to the public. Many strive to occupy certain political offices, not because they wish to serve the people for whose interest such an office and responsibility is created, but simply because they want to use the public office to amass material wealth and create an empire around themselves. The issue of “Leadership and Service” has eluded the people continually and the country at large.

The wrong aspect of that search for this singular individual touched upon something that most Nigerians have hardly factored into the causes of the crisis of leadership in Nigeria. Nobody would be wrong to claim that Nigeria has absorbed far more of the traditional and non democratic tendencies than the democratic and egalitarian tendencies that humanise modern societies. Most people have not taken their time to look at the natural surroundings of those who seek and aspire to lead the Country. The people, who are supposed to serve as leaders turned out to be “Ethnic Crusaders”. Every political figure in the country, no matter his political clout, must ride on the back of his ethnic group to succeed.

As it is known, the environment that an individual emerged from will significantly influence his lifestyle. Very few people understand that the ethnic environment that

the Individual politicians operate from shaped their impression and also influences their relationship with those outside that particular environment. It is usually the aggregate opinion of those within an individuals Community that one takes along to the National politics. For instance, in the Hausa-Fulani Community, the candidate to emerge from an Electoral Constituency must be an individual from the Community, and those who will vote for the person are also predominantly Hausa-Fulani people. So, it translates that the person will be going to national politics to represent and protect the interest of those that sent him.

However the general consensus is that Nigerians do not need “a leader.” What Nigeria and Nigerians need today are leaders, highly conscious and capable men and women who can dream today the possibilities of tomorrow, people who can give their all in a way to dig Nigeria out from the Coma it has plunged itself into. Leaders who do not give recognition to ethnic based political ideals. However, the common language on the lips of the people, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, has always been the question of those who would “rule” rather than the language of those who can “lead” the country to greatness. This reflects the non democratic tendency that prevails in the three ethnic groups understudy. But in modern terms, society ought not to be “ruled,” rather, citizens ought to be “served” by its true and dedicated leadership.

But then, the typical Igbo, Yoruba, or Hausa-Fulani person always chooses to invest so much time and resources in the rhetoric of “rulership” that many people sometimes forget the particular implication of the term. The attitude reflects the exact political situation within the three ethnic regions. It creates an environment that portrays the populace as a long oppressed, and as a people mastered and dominated by the few elites, and indeed as people, who have found themselves mostly under the control of those to whom the people gave their mandate to govern the country. Every single opinion on the leadership issue in the country is supported with ethnic influenced reasons, why an occupier of a particular political position in the Country should belong to a particular ethnic Identity.

For long, Nigerians irrespective of ethnic identity abandoned their rights of consent. The people just simply kept quiet and remained comatose under the iron grip of the tyrants, who parade themselves as “Democrats”. Yes, they could be described as

democrats, but they are “Democrats without democratic Credentials”. Their Antecedents do not qualify them to be regarded as Democrats. Many do not want to see the wish of the people decide their political faith. They spend fortunes fighting election, and at the end of the exercise, they end up converting the resources meant for the development of the Constituencies for personal use. And by so doing, the general needs of the people are unattended to. Politicians from the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani are guilty of this act of sabotaging the public political agenda. This is an agenda structured on the needs of the people.

The ordinary Men and Women in the localities need the basic amenities that help life on everyday basis. There are no good roads within majority of the rural communities in the Igbo homeland, the Yoruba ethnic region, and as well as the Hausa-Fulani Communities. But the representatives of the people are usually either in the state capitals or the federal capital enjoying every aspect of the social amenities, and without any recourse to the suffering of those that sent them there. Most of the local villages are cut off and separated from the major urban areas. And that is also how most of the elected politicians are separated and far removed from their electoral constituencies, until when the next election approaches.

And to make the matter worse, the strong men at the home front always hid their heads, never willing to fight for their political freedom. Only a handful of courageous young men stood up, and when it came to the crunch, they are often left in the lurch, and abandoned. In the end, people of questionable character become the “rulers.” As a pointer to the disaffection of the people, irrespective of ethnic and political leaning, the lacking in Infrastructural Developments in Nigeria since 1999, and the attendant disapproval of the political class by the electorate suggest that people are increasingly becoming impatient, and unwilling to be oppressed or “ruled” without any sign of accountability to those who selected them. This also accounts for the frequent high turn-out of the members of states and National Assemblies. People are always dissatisfied and angered by the low democratic returns of the elected members of the Parliaments.

There is an increase in destruction, perhaps challenge, to the sources of authority in the three ethnic nations. People are deeply frustrated to the point that so many things of alien knowledge kept surfacing in the three societies under review. The



kidnappings; the failure of the institutions of law, disorder in every aspect of the society; lawlessness, and insecurity are increasing symptoms or manifestations of dissent; a testimony that the Nigerian state as it is democratically constituted is rapidly disintegrating. This is also without particular reference to any ethnic group. Some areas within the Nigerian state are known for disorder and lawlessness, and there are also areas known for breakdown of institutions of law and order. There is no branch of Nigerian State, as represented by the ethnic regions that has never suffered or still suffering from self inflicted political kwashiorkor<sup>2</sup>.

This is indeed an internal reflection of the unhappy truth that more people are tearing up the social contract with the Nigerian State, because it is like a dud Cheque. This is also occasioned by the ostentatious lifestyles of those elected Officials, who were supposed to protect the political Interest of those that got them elected. It is also a sabotage of the peoples' aspirations, because they diverted the resources meant for public good to their individual backyards. It is also a deceitful act, because they frustrated every possible chance to give account of their Stewardship to their various political Constituencies.

However, there are many scholars and political analysts, who are of the political opinion that the Country suspended her republican status since January 1966, and by implication abolished also the principle of federalism which the country's founding fathers agreed to operate. By the operational principle of the successive governments of the country, many scholars agreed that, the central government has firmly and so fully appropriated the power and rights of the federating states, and that what presently operates in Nigeria is effectively an unwarranted feudalistic centre.

This Author and like many other interests in the country believes that the system as it is currently structured is not working for Nigeria, and it is obvious that the crisis of the Nigerian state emanates principally from the distortion of the conceived republican status of the country. The structures of the state are too weak to remain resilient against the pressures of Nigeria's multiethnic characters. The rejection of the 1957 negotiated agreement through the military in 1966 by their suspension of the

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2. *Kwashiorkor is a term associated to loss of nutritional Ingredients in Food Consumption.*

Republican Constitution created the deepest loophole in the Nigerian project as no subsequent effort was capable of replacing that agreed platform. If the Charter was allowed to remain, the political fortunes of the various ethnic groups would have been better managed.

The agreements created the basis upon which Nigerians agreed to live together as a federating country. Like many scholars would want to argue, that unless the country returns to the principles incorporated in the country's foundational charter, as represented by the several initiatives made possible by her founding fathers, and which was suspended in 1966 by the men in military fatigue, Nigeria will inevitably head to the rocks. Each of the ethnic nationalities was able to develop at its own pace as supported by the resources available to it, without any interference from the central government. Each ethnic region was able to initiate programmes without being dictated to by the central government. People have no reason to depend on the central government for the provision of their essential needs. The system instilled in the politicians and also the non active politicians the desire to be service conscious to their Electoral Constituencies and as well as to their ethnic homelands.

It is not an exaggeration of fact rather it is a confirmation of reality that the country is at the moment resting on weak and vague defined political tripod. There is no existing evidence to prove that the three ethnic groups are willing to live together and side by side of each other. Though, politicians from the three ethnic groups sit side by side with each other at the National Parliament, and also during the federal executive council meetings, they cannot curtail the excesses of their people back home. Democracy goes along with service to the people. But unfortunately the peoples' representatives turned the privilege freely given to them by their own people to an avenue of amassing Wealth. So, through their actions, the people at home are left to suffer for lack of various basic necessities of Life.

In its present form, the country does not represent many of the people living in it; its current formation can best be defined as a product of a non democratic order bequeathed by the military, with set of ideals geared towards conquest and control. But to restore Nigeria to the desired political status will require every vested interest in the Nigerian project to make hard choices. The hard choices needed are individual

driving, and at the same time Society driving. One political scientist and scholar, Mathias Ezeoba once lamented on the absence of the service minded politicians in Nigeria, when he said that,

“the people who aspire to represent their communities often turn out to be the very people, who deny the ordinary people their fundamental right to basic amenities”<sup>3</sup>.

Accordingly, it is not the government policies that limit the provision of basic amenities to the local populace; rather it is the very people, who were supposed to make the realisation of such programmes possible that frustrate the aspiration of the people. Sometimes Projects and Programmes sponsored and made possible by the development plan of the government are presented to the people by these representatives, as if it is their personal gift to the communities.

It is generally agreed that democratic politics is a medium of governance by which individuals render service to their political constituencies. Those who contested for any elective political positions in a democratic politics did so with utmost belief that they have the best of options needed to tackle some of the Problems confronting a given political environment. The behaviour of most of the elected Officials left many of the local people to wonder, if they will return after few years to solicit for their votes. According to Ademola Phillip,

“the elected Officials behave as if there is no tomorrow. But anyway, I do not blame them, rather I would blame our Poor and Illiterate voters, who by a mere gift of few Cups of Rice, or token amount of money, will go on to sell the only leverage they have against the Politicians”<sup>4</sup>

The frustration exhibited by Ademola Phillip and other people like him goes a long way to show how disgusted people are at the manner the elected politicians discharge their responsibilities to their Electoral Constituencies. The Service Vow made by the politicians during election campaigns does not matter again, the moment the individual takes oath of Office. Accordingly Samuel Garba lamented bitterly about the people representing his Electoral Constituency. He castigated them as being wholly inconsiderate, and he went on to accuse them of betraying those they were meant to represent.

People go into democratic politics not as means of amassing material wealth, but principally to provide selfless human service to one's political environment. Going into democratic politics does not also amount to securing authority and power for coercive reasons. Most elected Officials in Nigeria, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, see themselves as demigod. And as such cannot be reprimanded or requested to render account of their Stewardship.

It is so common to see people going into politics just for the sake of amassing wealth for themselves and for their families. In Nigeria today, it is a common belief, that as soon as an individual secures the mandate of a political party for any election into a vacant political post, then such an individual becomes an instant wealthy person, particularly if the party is the ruling Party.

However, chances are that, the individual in question might have been having troubles feeding himself and his family. But after riding on the back of a political Investor to win an election, he becomes so powerful that the law of the Land can no longer apply to him. The abuse of democratic norms has made many Nigerians to believe that safest and surest way to become Wealthy is to control a certain political Office.

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3. Mathias Ezeoba is a Professor of Political Science at the University in Zurich, Switzerland

4. Ademola Philip, is a School Teacher based in Abeokuta, Interview on 15/10/2010

### **8.1.2. Democracy, Government Structure and the Ethnic Factor in Nigeria.**

In democratic politics, a government is meant to be formed by a political party or parties after an election. The structure of the government at the end of the process is also supposed to represent the best that the winning Party can use to resolve or solve most of the problems confronting a given political Constituency, and indeed the general society.

In every ethnic region of Nigeria, people are selected to serve their constituencies not based on their expertise or competence but simply on the basis of political allegiance and patronage. At the end of the day, the government formed becomes riddled with people who have little or nothing to offer the ordinary man on the street.

Individual ethnic base or tribal affiliation is considered more valuable than the qualification of the character, and the needs of the citizens. The elevation of ethnicity to the level of the most necessary and determining factor in Nigeria does not only retard progress, but it makes the political future of the country uncertain.

A democratic government structured along ethnic lines cannot provide her citizens the desired and necessary push needed to turn around most aspects of the society. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the political parties are contributing largely to the ethnic division of the country. This is done through policy of office sharing or allocation. People are already conditioned to believe that certain political offices must be allocated to a particular ethnic region, or that an office must be occupied by an individual from a particular ethnic region.

Before an individual is appointed into any government agency, the locality of the person in question must be considered first. This includes but is not limited to the issue of state of origin, the region within the country; and most important the religious affiliation of the person. All these put together are ranked above the qualification of the individual based on merit. A case in hand is the issue of office allocation by the ruling People Democratic Party (PDP). After the election of 2011, the Party won the Presidency as well as the largest Seats at both Chambers of the federal Parliament. As the Party tried to share the offices, it decided to apply Zoning in the allocation

(See chapter 11 for more details). The process was based on ethnicity, though it was described as geopolitical Zones. The positions were not shared based on merit, but purely on the basis of ethnic affiliation. This is attested to through the pronouncement made by the Party after intense horse-trading, lobby and intrigues.

The National leaders of the ruling Party agreed that they were going to sustain the existing zoning arrangement of the Party, and that is irrespective of how the Party performed in each of the zones. The Major offices were allotted in the following order: South-South (President), North-West (vice president), North-Central (Senate president), South-West (House speaker), South-East (Secretary to Government of the Federation (SGF), and deputy Senate president) and North-East (national chairman and deputy speaker).

But the arrangement as it is, did not please every section of the country, particularly members of the party who are of Igbo extraction. The Igbo members of the party at the national Parliament feel short-changed by the decision of the party to reward the Yoruba ethnic region with the position of the Speaker of the House of Representatives (HR). However, in the Yoruba ethnic region of the western Nigeria, the Action Congress of Nigeria won virtually every contestable electoral position during the 2011 National elections in the Zone. Only 5 members of the House of Representatives and 1 Senator were elected through the Party Platform in the entire Yorubaland. But in the South-East (Igboland), about 33 of the total number of members of the House of Representatives from the area, were elected on the Platform of the ruling party, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

So, members of the party from the area felt cheated by the method of reward adopted by the Party. Sharing of Offices based on ethnic configuration is inimical to democratic norms. It does not encourage the growth of proper democratic principle. It breeds resentment in the polity, and so endangers the stability of the Nigerian State. By relegating “Competence, Ability and Capacity” in place of ethnic consideration, the Nigerian politicians have succeeded in proving to the World that, democracy as far as the country is concerned rests on the branches of the ethnic nationalities.

### 8.1.3. **Democracy: Governance and the Society in Nigeria.**

There are two levels of political assessment in Nigeria. These are Power enthusiasm and Development enthusiasm. The former represents a political situation, where a politician is bent on using every available tool to silence, or subdue any perceived opponent within his electoral constituency. This is done mostly through bribery offered to the management of the political parties, or sharing materials with some senior members of the party in an electoral constituency, or financial inducement to members of the party elected as delegates to nominate the candidates. So, in connivance with the party management team, interested candidates are shut out from the race, denied the opportunity of presenting themselves for service to their constituencies. The consequence is the shattered hope of the voters who are nursing the chances of having good and responsible representation, and thereby the opportunity to enjoy the promises of democracy. Their enthusiasm for a responsible representation is further postponed. Indeed, the voters are usually optimistic that the individual to be elected will work for the good of their community.

However, these two factors vary from one electoral constituency to another, and vary also from federal state to another federal state, and it varies as well from one individual interpretation to another individual's acceptance. See tables 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 below. In some communities and states within the three ethnic regions in Nigeria, there are people who were much satisfied with the amount of structural development in their areas. Then, there are also people who do not in any way or form appreciate the works of the elected government officials in their local communities, as well as the country as a whole

Are you in any way satisfied with the performance of those who represent your community? Only one option to be chosen. No of respondents in Abeokuta: 20 (Questionnaire Interview)	
Very satisfied	0
Fairly satisfied	4
Not very satisfied	2
Not at all satisfied	13
Nigeria is not a democracy	1
Do not know	0

Table 8.4 response of participants in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

Are you in any way satisfied with the performance of those who represent your community? Only one option to be chosen. No of respondents in Enugu: 26 (Questionnaire Interview)	
Very satisfied	2
Fairly satisfied	4
Not very satisfied	8
Not at all satisfied	11
Nigeria is not a democracy	1
Do not know	0

Table 8.5 showing responses of participants in Enugu (Source Okoro 20011)

Are you in any way satisfied with the performance of those who represent your community? Only one option to be chosen. No of respondents in Kano: 19 (Questionnaire Interview)	
Very satisfied	3
Fairly satisfied	3
Not very satisfied	6
Not at all satisfied	7
Nigeria is not a democracy	0
Do not know	0

Table 8.6 showing responses of participants in Kano (Source Okoro 2003)

The information derived from the three case study towns of Abeokuta, Enugu, and Kano and as presented above in tables 8.4, 8.5, and 8.6 is most similar. Though conducted in different towns and within different ethnic regions in the country, the respondents present the same line of reaction. In Abeokuta only 4 respondents from a total of 20 participants agreed that they are fairly satisfied with the performance of the elected politicians in their constituencies, but a whopping 15 respondents out of 20 participants returned negative assessments about the performance of the elected officials. This negative report coincided also with the failure in expectation of the voters who had expected strong development in their constituency through their political representative.

In another way, the respondents in Enugu followed the same pattern in response to the performance of their elected representatives. Out of 26 participants who responded to the questionnaire demand, only 2 respondents gave positive response. They submitted that the elected officials are performing very well, while 4 respondents said that they are fairly satisfied with the performance of their elected representatives, but a total of 20 respondents returned negative verdict with regard to



the political performance of their representatives. There are people who even go as far as believing that there is no democratic politics in Nigeria.

However, the result in Kano did not look different either from the other two case study areas. But unlike in Abeokuta and Enugu, the result of Kano showed that 3 respondents each out of 19 participants agreed that they are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the performance of their elected political representatives, while 6 and 7 respondents respectively returned negative report about the performance of their elected officials. Hardly can somebody give a positive credit to the performance of the politicians in any part of the country irrespective of ethnic affiliation.

But then, the irony is this, most people in the local communities in the states where the elected government is providing her citizens with some cosmetic social amenities tend sometimes to equate the actions of the state government to that at the federal level. This they do without having any knowledge about the actual actions of the federal government. Because their state government is performing in the delivery of dividend of democracy, like provision of portable drinking Water, construction and reconstruction of roads networks, providing drugs at the Hospitals and making available other basic facilities in their communities, such like reconstruction and refurbishing of School Classrooms, so they would want to believe that the same structural development they are experiencing in their own area or state takes place as well in every other community in Nigeria.

But the fact is that some states may be actually good at providing resources to the ordinary people within their political jurisdiction, but there are many states that do not care to know, if there are facilities for a pregnant woman, who might go into labour in any of the Health facilities in the local communities. However in a federal state where the elected government is doing averagely well in providing the citizens with the basic amenities they need to run their daily lives, then there is the tendency of some uninformed local people, who hardly go outside their communities, or those who do not have access to quality information on the political development at the federal level to equate the physical development in their area to that at the federal Level.

But if someone visits any community where the elected government is struggling or where Corruption has made it impossible for the people to enjoy any sort of democratic dividend, then a new assessment will emerge. In any community that is suffering from bad governance, the people always grade the entire elected government both in the federal states and at the national level to be corrupt, and go on to accuse the elected officials of being self centred.

Considering the nature of politics in Nigeria, it does follow that the governance and the product of the individuals in charge of the different national agencies, reflects the character of the government. For the fact that members of the government are not selected based on the premise of merit and ability of the individuals to perform, it becomes difficult to expect much from the government that so emerged.

Those who run the affairs of the government, and who by their positions in the administration foresee the Planning and implementation of government policies, do not often have a plan or measures needed to tackle some of the needs and problems of the populace. Most of the government functionaries are far separated from the reality on the various cities and villages in the country. Thus, do not have ideas on what the people on the Streets need to carry on with their daily lives.

Though, the government functionaries are selected from different federal states, as well as from different tribal groups across the country, the end result does not mean anything different. They end up not representing the interest of the group that produced them neither do they represent the interest of the general public. The functionaries only end up representing their individual families and surrogates at the expense of the entire country.

#### **8. 4. Service enthusiasm and dividend of democracy**

In the past, and precisely during the era of Military Government in Nigeria, the people did not make public request to the men in Uniform. There was also no direct means of communication between the people and those who control the affairs of the state. The ordinary people are cut off from the Government. But then, the reason for all

these are not far fetched, as those in government at the time were not directly elected by the people and they never emerged through popular will.

The Euphoria created by the return to civil rule in Nigeria was well celebrated beyond ethnic lines. The usual fault lines that divide the three ethnic groups went missing, thereby ushering strong hope and optimism that the political situation in the country was going to change for the better. It is difficult to point out any difference in terms of acceptance of the democratic system of government by the three ethnic groups in Nigeria. The near zero percentage returns by the several individuals elected by the people to represent them since 1999 is a Barometer that anybody could use to measure their activities. Alhassan Modibo during a discussion on the political situation in the Hausa-Fulani dominated northern region of the country stated that,

“the politicians in the region lack every element of human sympathy. Because they often abandoned those who made their success possible, and in fact without any recourse to the plight of the ordinary men and women whose mandate they are holding”<sup>5</sup>

It is a common knowledge that many Contracts are awarded for the Construction or Rehabilitation of Bridges and Roads, and other basic amenities within the Constituencies, only for the Contracts sum to be inflated to an astronomical point, and at the end, have the Projects uncompleted and abandoned for the next election period. Many awarded Contracts have gone through this process, thereby denying the public the chance of enjoying the Contractual Agreement they had with the politicians and their political parties during elections. In this vein, a social critic resident in Benin City, Alfred Oseni lamented that,

“the politicians and the government are insensitive to the suffering of the people they tend to represent. The Benin to Lagos Road has been under reconstruction on Contract paper for 12 Years. Many innocent travellers have perished on the road because of the dangerous nature of the road. But every Year, the politicians and their parties will Campaign with promise of completing the road. And 12 years on, the road has not been completed, and people are dying on the road still”<sup>6</sup>

Interestingly, the Benin to Lagos Road is a major link road, linking the entire area known as eastern region. But it is so unfortunate that the government has no regard to the pains of the people living in this part of the Country. If the people cannot have good road to travel on, then it is a total failure and betrayal of political trust by those in Government. In like manner, Chijioke Ozomelu lamented also about the attitude of the federal government towards keeping to the promises the party made to the voters during election. He was particular about the Onitsha to Enugu federal road, when he said that,

“the federal road linking Onitsha to Enugu has been in comatose since 1999, Olusegun Obasanjo first tenure and it has remained to the present tenure of Goodluck Jonathan, uncompleted.”<sup>7</sup>

The non deliverance of Democratic Dividend is not limited to any particular region or ethnic group in the country. According to the report generated from the Field, it is purely a Service issue. Most of the people in the position of political authority do not necessarily care about the common welfare of those they represent. To attract developmental projects to their constituencies, the elected officials instead prefer trading off such opportunities.

A large number of respondents in the Towns of Enugu, Kano and Abeokuta believed so well that the only category of people that enjoy every attribute of democratic Governance are the politicians themselves. This number agreed in unison that the ordinary people, who ordinarily should be the greatest beneficiary of Democracy, are the one suffering. But the irony of the whole thing is that, after every 4 years the same Officials will return to the electorates, soliciting for their mandate. And despite the fact that there is no single atom of Accountability for the previous mandate given to them, most of them end up been re-elected.

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5. *Alhassan Modibo, is a Civil Servant in a Federal Ministry in Kano*

6. *Alfred Oseni is a Staff of the University of Benin, Benin City, Interview 12/11/2010 in Enugu*

7. *Chijioke Ozomelu, is an Activist based in Enugu, Interview on 08/10/2010*

## **8.5 Development Enthusiasm and Expectation Failure**

By the inception of democratic politics in the country, people's expectation was on the high side. Many citizens from the three ethnic groups expected a rapid infrastructural development in their areas. Indeed, Infrastructures that are initiated by them and which ultimately will relate to their needs and wants. Developmental Initiative that is capable of opening up the very interiors of the ethnic homelands. The simple idea, that people will have the opportunity to elect their representatives, and also to decide on the project they feel relevant in their lives, makes everyone to feel optimistic about the future.

Despite the abundant resources, the aspirations of the people are far from being realised. The Problem this time is no longer that of the men in military uniforms, rather it is the problem created by the erstwhile neighbours in the cities and in the villages. It is so sad that, since the departure of the military, there has not been any meaningful Infrastructural blueprint from the Government. Most of the Infrastructural facilities dotting different corners in the three ethnic nationalities are the product of the former military governments.

To further prove that the politicians irrespective of ethnic origin played on the Intelligence of their people; is the issue of "Contract awarding and Project completion". Most times projects are awarded without strict time specification. Majority of the respondents in Enugu, Abeokuta and Kano agreed that most of the elected politicians lacked the Interest of those who get them elected. There is the agreement that the politicians often awards Contracts, but such Contracts are never completed, as they are used for Campaign every four Years.

It is so absurd and disheartening, what the elected Officials are doing with the resources of their communities. Most of them would wait until the next election before making any effort to create a Window dressing like a programme in their communities. All these are done as means of hoodwinking the mostly uninformed village people. Indeed most of the elected Officials do not win their elections on the account of their Stewardship to their electoral Constituencies rather they use money and material gift Items to buy their votes.

## **9. Natural Impediments to Democracy in Nigeria.**

Ethnic heritage as one among the various serious factors militating against the movement of democratic politics from its transitional level to a sub-stable level in the country, presents a political dilemma difficult to resolve. As stated before, each of the three ethnic groups under review in this study respond to issues related to national politics differently. There is hardly if any at all, unified response to any issue that borders on national politics. The case study areas provided an opportunity to measure the opinions of people within these towns, as well as people from the three ethnic nationalities, about the issues that affect democratic politics in the country.

### **9.1. Ethno-political divide and Democratic Politics in Nigeria**

The political landscape of Nigeria is enmeshed in ethno – regional politics. This has been one of the most salient factors determining electoral outcome in Nigeria. Like in every other aspect of human endeavour, each person thinks first about his homeland and that includes his ethnic group. The simple fact that the people, who inhabit the geographical landmass of Nigeria, do not regard themselves as Nigerians first creates political suspense in the country.

Within the Hausa-Fulani the dominant political belief is that, the unity of the northern region must be kept together. Every Hausa-Fulani political actor depends heavily on the unity of the ethnic group to succeed. It has also remained as common denominator in the political calculation of the people from the area. This they always accomplish by appealing to their common fear, which is the political domination of the area by people of other ethnic groups. The last thing a common Hausa-Fulani would want to hear is the idea of an Igbo person or a Yoruba person controlling his political destiny. The wide spread belief that they are Muslims and the Igbo are not, creates an unending mistrust against the Igbo (See also table 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8). Most Hausa-Fulani have a different perception and interpretation of the country Nigeria. Reacting to the frequent conflict between the Hausa-Fulani and the people of non Hausa-Fulani extraction, Iro. I. Uke maintained that,

“in every Hausa-Fulani Community, every Igbo person is an unbeliever, and as such not to be regarded as a normal human being, or somebody that does not have the same human quality with them”<sup>1</sup>.

In support of the above expression, Uzoma Ibegbu, criticised the political intolerance of the Hausa-Fulani, which they often turn to ethnic cleansing without any provocation, when she said that,

“Majority of the Hausa-Fulani believe that any political Leader who does not come from the northern region is not worthy of the peoples electoral sympathy”<sup>2</sup>.

To an average Hausa-Fulani person, National elections in Nigeria is not just about the contesting Individual, it is not also just about a political party, rather it is more importantly about the ethnic and regional Identity of the individual contesting for the Office of the President. Put differently, what motivates majority of the voters within the Hausa-Fulani community is not necessarily the ability to serve and deliver the dividend of Democracy to the teeming Population. The Interpretation of purpose of Democracy by majority of the Hausa-Fulani as means of testing for political superiority between them and the other two ethnic nationalities of Igbo and the Yoruba stands as a drawback to actualising the full potential of Democracy in the Country.

Unlike what is obtainable within the Hausa-Fulani community, the Yoruba are separated in many diverse ways. In terms of National elections, the Yoruba do not support any candidate that does not agree with their own political terms.

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1. Dr. Iro I. Uke is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Abuja, Nigeria. Interview conducted 07/06/2009

2. Uzoma Ibegbu is a Retired Official in the Federal Ministry. Interview 08/10/2010 in Enugu.

In as much as there is no candidate of Yoruba extraction contesting in the election, they are always contented playing the opposition. The Yoruba are geographically detached from the Igbo in the eastern region of Nigeria, as well as the Hausa-Fulani in the extreme northern region of the country. It goes further to make them feel unconcerned about the political needs of other two ethnic nationalities. The assumptions that the three ethnic groups are poles apart make the Nigerian project appear as a Battlefield where only the fittest can survive.

The Cultural heritage and Tradition of the Yoruba differ from that of the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani. A Yoruba prides himself with every little thing around him. The Yoruba pride themselves to be on a different political pedestal. In fact, they pride themselves to be politically superior to the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo. Just like the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba see their language as a natural Bond that cannot be broken by any artificial combination of thoughts.

The Natural embankment presented by the location of the Binis between the Yoruba and the Igbo in the South and the location of the Igbira ethnic group between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani in the northern region detached them from other two ethnic nationalities of Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani. The Yoruba are naturally cut off from any direct link with the Igbo, or the Hausa-Fulani. The Language barrier is also another natural barrier that differentiates the Yoruba from the Igbo.

It is not by chance that people are peddling such political understanding in the country rather it comes with the very foundation of the country. This is so because the natural heritages which the people identify with are different and diverse, both in acceptance and by rejection. The Natural heritage provided through visible Cues as well as through invisible cues is significantly different from region to region. This includes among other things the topography of the areas, physical outlook of the peoples of the ethnic groups, and the cultural endowment within the three ethnic nationalities (See chapter 1 and chapter 3).

The Language difference is a significant minus in the effort to manage a successful democratic adventure in Nigeria. Language, though as one of the many aspects of invisible cues separating the three ethnic groups of Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba in



Nigeria, it thus stands as a natural Platform for the people to rely on in passing their intentions out to their constituencies. It serves also as the most potent instrument used by the various ethnic groups to rally round their different people. The customs and traditions existing in the three ethnic nations contributed immensely in the division of the country into different ethnic consciousness.

The people from the three ethnic nations do not share common names. The Names that the people in the Igbo ethnic region take is not also the same Names that the Yoruba or the Hausa-Fulani takes. Most of the Names Yoruba Christians take are not also the same Name the Yoruba Muslims take, and it is not also the same Names that Hausa-Fulani Muslims take. So, the name taking is another natural separation between the Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba. People are easily identified either for elimination, discrimination, or total rejection through their names.

Before anybody identifies with another person, the Name of the Individual will determine the level of communication as well as the nature of discussion between the two individuals. The desire or urge for discussion of any kind depend largely on the Names of the intended participants. An individual will only be willing or ready to divulge certain information to his discourse partner on the basis of affinities shared by them. If there is no existing affinity between the two intended discussants, then chances are that they will end up not revealing certain information to each other. In any matter involving individuals from the three ethnic groups, the name anyone bears will either disadvantage the person or work to his advantage.

So, each group regards itself as an entity within a Conglomeration of ethnic nations in Nigeria. Each ethnic nation has a living culture and tradition, geographical enclave, and Organisational structure and capacity. Each ethnic group can stand alone and progress as an Independent entity. The diverse endowments in the three ethnic regions create an unstable environment for democracy to prevail in Nigeria. There are so many factors that divide the three ethnic nations, than the natural factors that tend to join them together. None of the existing natural factors within the three ethnic regions supported any democratic Institution between them.

Though, there is no environment that is completely or 100 percent conducive for democracy, but there are certain requirements that help democracy to grow. But when natural impediments to a successful democratic society outweigh the structural impediments, then it becomes a difficult task to achieve. The natural classification of the three geographical regions as the natural homelands of the three ethnic groups remains the greatest obstacle to democracy in Nigeria. The separated areas instil in the people the belief that they are not the same, and were not meant to be the same. Democracy in Nigeria can only work irrespective of ethnic or religious affiliation, when the prime actors see themselves as belonging to the same country. The visible cues, as regards the violent attacks and hate actions based on ethnic affiliation, as well as the invisible cues, with regards to those issues based on common fear, loss of identity, usually discussed in private; jointly stand as hindrance to the full attainment of democratic politics in Nigeria.

#### **9.1.2. Political Commitment: Dilemma of Ethnic dependent**

The desire to serve is usually a sacrifice that goes beyond any human structural thinking. It is mostly derived out of love for one's community. It is not based on any primordial thinking, neither is it derived from selfishness. However, it is not necessarily so in Nigeria. People decide to go into public service in order to serve the people per se, but mostly on individual or personal terms. And most people begin to play the ethnic game the moment they secure employment in any of the public Institutions.

Most people from the three ethnic regions of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani believe that going into politics is like partaking in the rehearsal preceding the demise of the country. While some go into politics so as to project the political agenda of his ethnic group, whose mandate he is entrusted to. As was earlier stated, no individual of the other ethnic group can stand election successfully in another ethnic region, other than his ethnic homeland.

Conversely, people vote for candidates during elections in a bid to select those, whom they believe will represent their interests constructively. At the National level, the question is not how many bills a member of the Parliament sponsored or initiated,

the issue is, did the community enjoy any meaningful development through the presence of the individual at the National Parliament? The Community did not send anybody to the National Parliament just to make up the number, or mark presence of the community at the National level.

When the primary objective of a community is to send somebody to the National government, who will be capable enough to fight the battle of the community, then the Individual sent, will always be conscious of the demand of his community. This is also based on the fact that the individual needed only the vote of his ethnic group in his community to be elected. So, since a Yoruba Man does not depend on the votes of Igbo resident in his area to be elected, then it means that the individual so elected will be going to the National Parliament as the mouthpiece of those that sent him there.

## **9.2. Ethnic Preference and Individual choice: The National elections.**

The choice people make in most cases is dependent on two primary factors. These are the question of the Individual group preference, and also, the choice of the individual in making and taking decisions. Most people are made to jettison their individual choice on the excuse of ethnic opinion and consideration. But then, the people are not to be faulted for such political measures. When people feel that they are of the same ethnic stock, and thus are faced by the same common threats, and needs, they will endeavour to strategise on how to salvage and sustain their common interest.

Majority of the electorates across the three ethnic groups vote to elect their representatives at the National Parliament on the sole premise of defending their common ethnic interest. Most people as a matter of historical fact; always prefer to sacrifice their individual preference to that of community choice. The common effort to sustain the survival of their ethnic interest made most people not see anything wrong in voting against a candidate from another ethnic group during national elections.

A Hausa-Fulani person will always prefer to cast his vote for someone of northern origin, than doing the same to anybody with Igbo, or Yoruba background. Some of the reasons for their preferences are not far fetched. The Candidate that may emerge from the northern region will most probably bear the same Name like almost every other person in the region. The Individual so chosen may likely be a Muslim, and will certainly have Hausa-Fulani biological parents. So, it is a wide belief that such an individual is one of them, and will always remain one of them (see table 7.12, 7.3, and 7.14).

During national elections, people are faced with two options. These options are usually subjected to serious political and social analysis. Reason is that one has to decide either to follow the political opinion of the members of his ethnic community, or to take decisions different from the popular and dominant argument of his ancestral homeland. The communal solidarity that is deeply rooted in the common lives of people within the three ethnic communities creates group sympathy. The ethnic group and the geographical region an Individual candidate comes from contribute significantly in deciding voting pattern during National elections in Nigeria.

It is a common thing to hear somebody saying, we must vote for that person because he is one of us. We are of the same area, and we share the same political faith. The feelings people derived from the differences in language, outlook, religion and geographical location shape the political direction of the ethnic group significantly. For many respondents, it is not the party Programme or the prominent individuals in a Party that influences people, rather, it is the possible power structure that is to emerge, that defines the political landscape.

In the overall analysis, the number of electorates from the three ethnic groups, who cast their ballots on the premise of enthroning a strong government, was very negligible, when compared to those who cast their ballots because a particular candidate hails from their ethnic region. There is no national aggregate identification rather what exists in the country is ethnic aggregate identification. Within the three ethnic communities, an Individual of Igbo extraction, Hausa-Fulani or anybody of Yoruba extraction is described as somebody from a particular ethnic region and not as a Nigerian in the first instance. Most people see the stand of their ethnic group as

a justified venture that must be supported by all. So, ethnic choice determines the political direction of individuals during national elections.

#### **9.2.1. Ethnic Loyalty versus National Loyalty.**

The cultural differences of the people and their geographical locations within the political entity of Nigeria provide no fertile land for the nurturing of democratic politics. This begins with the fact that there is no element of national identity in its true sense or national homeland that every individual could identify with. The naturally defined location of ethnic nationalities within the Nigerian state suggests that there is no national homeland; instead what the environment provides is ancestral homeland. Every individual in Nigeria belongs to an ethnic group. And every ethnic group has an ancestral homeland.

So, an individual from one part of the country and from a particular ethnic group cannot claim to be an indigene of another village or town in another part of the country. The natural outlook of the country does not create space for any form of national identification. What does exist in Nigeria is ethnic as well as regional identity, solidarity and patronage. In the political questions that arise in the Peoples Democratic Party, when the President announced that he was going to contest the 2011 Presidential election, four prominent politicians of northern extraction, agreed to forgo their individual aspirations, but to make sure that the region produces the next President.

However it does emerge that the use of ethnic language is also another means of widening the gulf between the three ethnic nationalities. No individual from any of the three ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani, will consider substituting his native ethnic language to that of another ethnic nationality. And since there is no native language that is used as a national language, then ethnic languages will continue to serve as rallying point to the three ethnic groups. This will also make the identity question attributed to differences in language to remain unresolved.

The word nationality does not correlate with whatever anybody might want to associate with Nigeria. In Nigeria the word or expression nationality refer to one's

ethnic nationality or identity. So, to every average individual who hails from any part of the country does not see the word as representing his identity. So, an individual national identity is his ethnic homeland. According to findings by this researcher, every individual within the three ethnic groups mentioned his or her ethnic nationality first, then follow by the name of the village or town such an individual hails from.

In any national discussion or individual discussion, what identify an individual is the ethnic group such an individual or individuals belong to. Every individual, no matter his ethnic origin places a very strong emotional attachment to issues concerning his ethnic group. So, ethnic loyalty in most cases takes superior position when national issues are on the table for discussion.

To many people across the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria, the name of the country is not in any way view to be synonymous with their thinking of a national identity, rather majority of the respondents view it as a mere reference to a geographical identification of the area they have their homeland located. According to Dr Iro,

“the name Nigeria does not refer to any group of people or an ethnic group; majority or minority, Christians, Muslims or traditionalists”<sup>3</sup>

In the same manner, Sobayo Shobande, while reacting in Abeokuta to a question on limitations to democracy in Nigeria, says that,

“he was thought at Childhood to be a Yoruba first, and to be a Yoruba second, and to remain a Yoruba always”<sup>4</sup>

It is discovered that in each of the three ethnic geographical enclaves in Nigeria, that common tradition and customs, as well as common native language is counted first, while every other thing is view and regarded as secondly and artificial. He maintained that, he never had any reason to question the rationale behind such teaching. He based his argument on the recurrent killings in the Northern part of the country as

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3. Dr. Iro I. Uke is a Senior Lecturer, University of Abuja. Interview 07/06/2009

4. Sobayo Shobande, is a Writer and Publicist, based in Abeokuta, Interview 16/10/2010

one of his reasons never to introduce himself under any other guise than as a Yoruba. But the truth is that Mr Shobande is not alone in this direction of thinking. There are many other people around, who prefer to remain silent. Nevertheless, the Yoruba are known to be pragmatic and vociferous about their nationalistic feelings. Irrespective of individual level of academic intelligence, or exposure, what comes to an individual thought remains always the ethnic identity of such an individual. Olagunju Bamidele once said that,

“it is not about the artificial symbols, but it is about the feeling that the various ethnic groups exhibit that matters, their devotion toward issues affecting their members, and their overall view of the structure and organisational setup”<sup>5</sup>

It is no longer a hidden secret. What one refers to as Nigeria is the government at the federal level. It is never about the people who inhabit the various parts of the geographical land area. Every ethnic group in Nigeria; be it the majority or minority plays politics that is tended to benefit their individual nations. The politics of we and them is so substantiated by the political behaviour of the three ethnic nationalities within their homeland and outside their homelands. The individuals from these various nationalities do consider first a political party that has a strong ethnic background.

Individuals who are resident in other ethnic homelands either for business or trade, as employees of a federal government agency, or as an employee in a private enterprise are not in any way separated from the political nature in his ethnic homeland. Each individual always look at the political trend at home, before taking a decision on what Party to support at his place of residence. In the just concluded 2011 national election for the Office of the President, if someone should take a cursory look at the results across the country geo-political zones, it will be discovered, that the voting pattern was dictated more by sentiments and emotions predicated on ethnic, religious and regional attachment and to an extent, individual recognition than national cohesion and ideological development.

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5. *Olagunju Bamidele is a Retired Teacher, and a Political Activist in Abeokuta. Interview 16/10/2010*

According to Olakitan a Hausa-Fulani man will always identify himself as such, and will always protect the overall interest of the Northern Hausa-Fulani, even if such an interest is detrimental to the unity of the State of Nigeria. A Hausa-Fulani electorate do not want to know, how well, the interest of his ethnic group, affect the interest of others, within the Nigerian State<sup>6</sup>.

But no matter how true this position of argument might be, the fact remains that individuals from the three ethnic groups strive tenaciously to outplay each other in the Nigerian political scene. Each of the ethnic groups has a Cultural organisation or Association with the aim of coordinating the aggregate opinion of the majority of the group. Their major function is to moderate the political direction of the groups, although on paper they are merely a Cultural association, but in practice, they are deeply involved in politics of the Land.

### 9.3. **Ethnic Political Interest versus National Political Good.**

The political desire of many people within the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria differs in many ways. A country is by nature to have set goals of interest, and those interests are meant to guide her in every activity that the government tends to propagate or promote. But then, in a country with several components or a society that is in itself strictly divided on many issues, the different communities within the whole will tend to have independent interests. Then, it does suggest that one will end up having a State interest for the country as a whole and individual nation's interest.

The tribal groups are always busy articulating their strategies on how to capture the most influential positions at the central government. It does not matter to them, if their individual political programme will be of benefit to the entire country or not. What to them is of most importance is the end result of their plans, which is to have someone of their ethnic stock controlling the government or at least holding some powerful ministerial positions in the formed central Government.

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6. *Abigail Olakitan, a Senior Staff in one of the federal Agencies in Ogun State. Interview 16/11/2010 in Abeokuta*



During the run up to the 2003 General election in Nigeria, the issue at the time was that of change of leadership due to bad governance by the government of then President Olusegun Obasanjo. Indeed, the political clamour at the time was for the government and the Party to be voted out of office. But to the amazement of so many people who do not know much about the unstable nature of the Yoruba people, Olusegun Obasanjo and his Party won the election in a landslide.

The Yoruba who before the election were the most vocal against the government of the Man from their ethnic group, voted en masse for the Man and his Party. Olusegun Obasanjo and his Party won even the federal states controlled initially by the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The Alliance for Democracy is a regional Party for the Yoruba, and it was deeply rooted in the old political philosophy of the Yoruba. It was indeed an offshoot of the old Action Group, and Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) led then by the late sage Obafemi Awolowo before the Independence, and during the second republic. Like Obasi Igwe pointed out,

“the Yoruba nation criticised the government maybe because they wanted him to pay more attention to their region, by providing them with many social amenities”<sup>7</sup>.

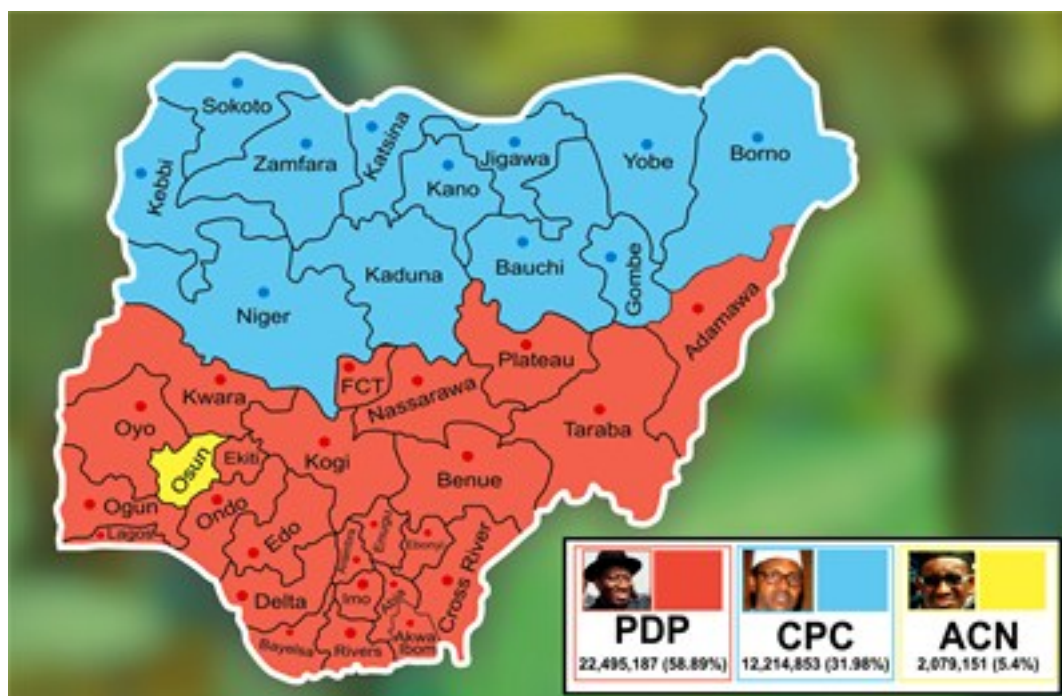
The political behaviour is not just the trade mark of the Yoruba, but it is a behaviour that is applicable to also the Igbo, as well as the Hausa-Fulani. Each ethnic group believes that, it is the only chance available for them to develop their Community, and also to advance their political relevance in the country. The popular thinking has been that whoever becomes the President will certainly concentrate Infrastructural development in his ethnic region.

The importance placed on ethnic political goals as above that of the entire Country, is inimical to general development of the country. The pressure exerted on the Political Office holders from their ethnic regions is significant. And this hinders their independent judgment on how best to administer the very resources available to the country. The Question of ethnic affiliations eliminates every sense of national political consciousness in the country. When anybody occupies any political position in the country, there is always the claim of ethnic domination in such Agency. When Olusegun Obasanjo was the President of the country, there were accusations from

the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani communities that the president only cares about his ethnic region. They accused him of doing that on the expense of other ethnic nationalities. But that is not surprising, because the Yoruba would in like manner criticise other ethnic regions, should the President come from outside Yorubaland.

The overriding political interest of the ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani has eclipsed whatever political thinking anybody could have envisaged for the country. The competition between the three ethnic groups creates negative influence on the many democratic initiatives that could be of immense benefit to the country. The political positions and demands of the opposing ethnic nationalities Outweighs the aggregate effort being made towards the general well being.

The recent National election conducted to elect a President divided Nigeria. Instead of uniting the various ethnic groups and peoples, it succeeded only in dividing the country into two parts of North and South. The outcome was largely blamed on the ethnic political consciousness and the quest for control of political power. The Map below tells more about the outcome of the election and fragile nature of the country.



Map 9.1 showing the performance of the parties in the April 2011 Presidential election (Source [www.nigerianmuse.com/2011](http://www.nigerianmuse.com/2011))

According to the Map 9.1, the blue coloured area of the map represents section of the country won by the retired General Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). He is a Northerner, Hausa-Fulani, from Daura Emirate council in Katsina State, and former Military Head of State. His Party won in areas dominantly populated by the core Hausa-Fulani in the Northern part of the country.

The red colour parts were won by Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan, who is also the incumbent President, and the candidate of the ruling Party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The Map 9.1 above shows how divided the country was made through the April 2011 Presidential election. The Map 9.1 itself further proves how delicate the country was structured by the recent election. The Hausa-Fulani core rejected the idea of the President standing for the election. They argued that, by the virtue of the PDP Constitution and as agreed by the party officials, it was the turn of the northern region to produce the Presidential candidate of the party. Indeed, the agitation that goes with the selection of the ruling Party flag bearer was purely ethnic influenced. The outcome was really not to the benefit of the country. This is because it divided the country further, and in a more dangerous pattern. According to tables 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 below, the voting pattern reinforced the argument this study established; with regard to ethnic and regional solidarity during national elections in Nigeria.

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7. Obasi Igwe is a Professor of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Interview 23/11/2010

**Voting pattern in the April 2011 Presidential Election: Result from 5 States in Eastern region of Nigeria.**

Enugu state (Eastern region)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	1,755	0.22	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	111	0.01	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	3,753	0.46	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	802,144	99.30	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Votes Cast.	807,763		

Table 9.1 shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

A: Anambra state (Eastern region)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	3,437	0.30	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	975	0.08	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	4223	0.37	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	1, 145,169	99.25	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Votes Cast.	1,153,804		

Table 9.1a shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

B: Imo state (Eastern region)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	14,821	1.05	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	2,520	0.18	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	7,592	0.54	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	1,381,357	98.23	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Votes Cast.	1,406,289		

Table 9.1b shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

C: Abia state (Eastern region)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	4,156	0.35	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	1,456	0.12	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	3,608	0.30	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	1,175,964	99.22	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Votes Cast.	1,185,173		

Table 9.1c shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

D: Rivers state (Eastern region)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	16,382	0.89	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	1,449	0.08	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	13,182	0.71	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	1,817,762	98.32	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Votes Cast.	1,848,775		

Table 9.1d, shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

### **Voting pattern in the April 2011 Presidential Election: Result from 3 States in Western region of Nigeria.**

Ogun State (Yorubaland)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	1,99,000	38.12	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	2,969	0.57	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	17,000	3.26	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	303,000	58.05	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	521,969		

Table 9.2 shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

A: Ekiti State (Yorubaland)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	116, 981	46.42	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	0	0.00	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	0	0.00	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	135,009	53.58	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	251, 990		

Table 9.2a shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

B: Osun State (Yorubaland)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	299,711	60.09	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	3,617	0.73	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	6,997	1.40	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	188,409	37.78	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	498,734		

Table 9.2b shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

### **Voting pattern in the April 2011 Presidential Election: Result from 4 States in Northern region of Nigeria.**

Kano State (Hausa-Fulani)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
ACN	42,363	1.61	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	526,310	19.98	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	1,624,356	61.68	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	440,666	16.73	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	2,633,683		

Table 9.3 shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

A: Jigawa State (Hausa-Fulani)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	17,366	1.57	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	7,673	0.69	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	663,994	59.91	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	419,252	37.83	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	1,108,274		

Table 9.3a shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

B: Bauchi State (Hausa-Fulani)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	16,674	1.04	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	8,777	0.55	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	1,315,209	82.25	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	258,404	16.16	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	1,599,064		

Table 9.3b shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

C: Kaduna State (Hausa-Fulani)			
Party Name	Votes Won	Vote won in %	Candidate
CAN	11,278	0.44	Nuhu Ribadu (North)
ANPP	17,301	0.68	Shehu. Shekarau (North)
CPC	1,334,244	52.26	M. Buhari (North)
PDP	1,190,179	46.62	G. Jonathan(East)
Total Vote Cast	2,553,002		

Table 9.3c shows the number of votes obtained by each political party and candidate in the April 2011 presidential election (Source adapted from [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org) 2011)

The poll returns from the three regions in the country during the April 2011 presidential election in Nigeria, open up many known but un-discussed national issues, as well as many questions with known answers and solutions but never given or proffered. The result obtained by Goodluck Jonathan and his political party in the eastern region is a testimony pointing out the ethnic game in Nigerian democracy. It is evident from the data presented in Table 9.1, that the vote received by Goodluck Jonathan and his political party covered the results he received in table 9.2, 9.2a, and 9.2b comprising 3 federal states in Yorubaland put together. Furthermore, the votes received by the President and his party in table 9.1b and 9.1d are more than the votes he received in the three federal states in Yorubaland and the four federal states in Hausaland put together.

However, the closest rival to the president and his party, Muhammed Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change won outright in the four federal states as presented in tables 9.3, 9.3a, 9.3b, and 9.3c. Anyway, the President and the ruling party was able to win some votes in the Hausa-Fulani extreme Northern part of the Nigeria purely on the strength of his Vice President who happens to come from that part of the country. Actually, those that voted for the ruling party in the four federal states, as presented in tables 9.3, 9.3a, 9.3b, and 9.3c, did so, because they feel that the Vice President is also representing the region in the power equation.

In the entire eastern region, there is no federal state, where the candidate of CPC won 1percent of the vote cast. The only federal state the President and his party performed very well was in table 9.3c, and that state happened to be the home state of his Vice President, but despite that, they lost the state to CPC challenger. As presented also in Map 9.1, it is clear that the President lost in the entire Hausa-Fulani states.

On the part of Yoruba ethnic nationality, the outcome of the election results as recorded in tables 9.2, 9.2a, and 9.2b confirmed the argument and finding of this study that the Yoruba always detach themselves from national politics, the moment nobody of Yoruba extraction is presented as a candidate for the office of the President in a national election. The voters' turnout in the western part of the country



was very low, though there is no accurate data to confirm the percentage, but it was very dismal compared to voters' turnout in both eastern and northern regions.

The voting trend as recorded in the northern region also confirmed ethnic mindset inherent in the political contest in Nigeria. Each region, every ethnic aspired always to produce the occupier of the presidential office. As argued previously, every political discussion during the period of a Presidential election is usually turned into ethnic and regional contest, particularly if the ruling party, being the dominant political party in the country, nominates somebody from any of the regions.

### 10. **Ethnic Identity and the Future of democracy in Nigeria**

Identity questions and the relevance of democratic politics are independent, but somewhat inter-connected. But the connectivity of the two variable factors, are not too far away from a stable society. Ethnic Identity as a vehicle for the recognition of someone's existence in this part of the universe remains untainted in the eyes of these three nationalities. However, the fact that the people within these ethnic groups view each other differently put question marks on the chances of democratic politics in the country.

Every little thing draws a great deal of public apprehension, and it is not in any way healthy to the success of democratic politics in the society. Besides, the nature of politics associated with the major players in the societies leaves much to be desired. Every individual politician nursed big concern for his ethnic group, but that is usually on the pages of Newspapers. In reality, each of them developed a different political philosophy the moment such person secured the mandate of his political constituency.

There is a wide gulf in differences, whenever a certain political Party wins the national election. At such time, can one begin to see the real political competition between the three ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani. At such times each tribal group would begin to play the ethnic card as well as raising the issue of political marginalisation at the national level. Promoters do not present qualification or merit as the yardstick for selection. In the end the government becomes ethnic constructed. The policy of ethnic balancing in the appointment and allocation of responsibilities account for low productivity and restrict application of needed knowledge. This is so, when for the sake of ethnic politics an individual with required expertise is left out of consideration on account that he does not hail from or that he is from a particular region, or of ethnic affiliation.

Where Appointment is made, then the religious affiliation of the individuals is equally considered. As there is policy for ethnic balancing, so there is also a policy for religious balancing. There is no federal political office appointment made without having the combination of the two Indicators raised above coming under serious scrutiny. But a society that wants the best available services for her people, ethnic background, and religious belief of a person should not matter. It is discovered that the policies made and pursued by the government tremendously affect the mindset and psyche of the citizens. The Government of Nigeria through her policies created situations that made people see each other as different. And this is done through the policy of ethnic balancing as well as religious balancing in the federal appointment.

#### **10.1. Ethnic Associations versus National Politics.**

In Nigeria, it is a common thing to see people of different ethnic groups forming themselves into associations and tribal unions. This is done both within the traditional homelands as well as in their host communities. The formed association serve as platform for the formulation of ideas and also the implementation of the derived ideas.

Among the Igbo community, alliances and solidarity stand as the Pillars holding the Igbo unity, and thus make them exceptional to Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba. Cultural Association played no significant role in the politics of Nigeria in the recent past, but towards the run up to the just concluded democratic election in the country, the Ohaneze Ndigbo (the people and Kings of the Igbo) assumed a significant political position in Igboland, as well as outside the homeland. The body took political position by supporting the candidacy of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Thus, making it the only Cultural Association, that voiced its preference for a particular candidate, during the 2011 general election. But there is a strong reason, why the Association acted in that manner. Goodluck Jonathan is from eastern region that included the Igbo, Ibibio, Efik, Anang and Ijaw. So, according to many commentators, it was like a general Consensus by the entire people of eastern part of the country to support their own person. This political position on the part of Ohaneze Ndigbo succeeded also in adding ethnic and regional colour to the April 2011 presidential election in the country.

As for the Yoruba, none of the leading Presidential candidates was a Yoruba. So the Afenifere Egbe Omo Oduduwa(Union of Oduduwa children, or descendant of Oduduwa), being the foremost Cultural Umbrella body of the Yoruba people did not view it necessary to voice their opinion to the public. Not throwing their support to any candidate publicly proved two things.

The first thing is that, the silence of the Yoruba Cultural Associations during the election campaigns confirmed them as being Ultra ethnic minded people. The Yoruba show no apology in disconnecting themselves from any political arrangement that does not favour their political interest. They are always firm and resolute in ignoring anything they are not directly involved in doing. The Yoruba are known for playing or accepting to play the opposition, when they are out of the central political equation in the country.

The second factor is that the Yoruba feel that they have nothing to loose even if they refuse to adopt any candidate. The Afenifere did not canvass for the support of any candidate or political Party. But implicitly, every Yoruba knows that no person of Yoruba extraction is contesting for the office of the President of the country. As noted before, the only election period in Nigeria, that the Yoruba as an entity voted along with the National Party was during the 2003-2007 second tenure of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

Apart from that period the Yoruba have been voting along a particular direction, under the Platform of its own regional political Party. As discovered, the trend among the Yoruba has been that of assuming the position of Opposition the moment somebody of their extraction is not the President of the country. It is not by chance that the Yoruba are credited with such political thinking, and application. After routing the ruling party in the region during the April 2011 national elections, the People Democratic Party (PDP), the people within the Yorubaland went into wild jubilation. Many claimed it to be a kind of liberation of the Yoruba from the political infection of the mainstream politics in Nigeria. So, the triumph of the Action Congress of Nigeria in Yorubaland is not celebrated as just another success of a political party, but it is viewed as triumph of the Yoruba political ideals over the ideal and positions of the other ethnic groups and political parties.

Unlike the Ohaneze Ndigbo, and Afenifere, the Arewa Consultative (ACF) Forum and the Northern Political Union (NPU) operate differently. The two Organisations are based in the Northern part of the Country. The Arewa Consultative Forum is a Cultural Association for the entire northern region. It is not restricted to Hausa-Fulani alone, but also the non Hausa-Fulani ethnic minorities in that part of the country. The body has never dabbled into the political frames of the country. It has never canvassed publicly for electoral support to any individual or political Party in the region. Though its deliberation has always been in secrecy, but it largely centred on the stability and position of the region within the larger Nigerian project. The Arewa Consultative Forum strongly believed in one single Northern Nigeria. The Northern political Union (NPU) on the hand is a political Union exclusively for politicians of Northern origin. It tries to harness and harmonise the political opinions of its members. It is neither a political party nor is it a political movement that command large population of members. Both Associations in the northern region of Nigeria are exclusively elite in nature and functions.

So, in each of the three ethnic regions, there abound cultural associations that are very difficult to be separated from the political realities evolving within each nation. That some of the ethnic cultural associations decided to play underground does not amount to abdicating the political turf. Their actions simply suggested that they do not want to identify publicly with any political party. But the truth is that, the members are also members of the political parties, hence supporting a particular candidate or political party in the open will create problem in the associations.

## **10.2. Ethnic Associations and Political Parties in Nigeria.**

Unlike the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo, the Yoruba have a cultural umbrella association called Afenifere and also the Yoruba Patriots. Both function as cultural as well as political mouthpiece of the Yoruba nation. But an interesting thing is that none of the ethno based Associations metamorphosed into a political Party, apart from the Afenifere. Some members of Afenifere with radical members of Alliance for Democracy partially and jointly formed the Action Congress of Nigeria. As stated earlier, the Action Congress of Nigeria is built on the structure of Yoruba political philosophy. Going back to memory lane, it would be understood that, the Action

Group was formed in the colonial period through the structure presented by the Yoruba cultural Association known as Egbe Omo Oduduwa (Association of Oduduwa descendants), under the leadership of Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo. The Egbe Omo Oduduwa was a strong catalyst for Yoruba unity, and it was at the fore-front among those associations clamouring for the protection of Yoruba interest as an ethnic group within the larger Nigeria.

People of Yoruba extraction are mostly attracted to a Party that is formed by the people of the region. The Yoruba so much believe in the preservation of each ethnic individual identity. In defining the connection between the ethno-cultural Associations and the political parties within Yorubaland on one hand, and the relationship between the Associations and the other hitherto existing parties within Nigeria. Like Ezeani reiterated that,

“the Yoruba idea and belief that they are Yoruba at the first instance, different from other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, and thus must at any cost strive to maintained their singular identity; made them to always support any political Party formed within the Yoruba homeland”<sup>1</sup>

The Yoruba believed so much in themselves. Even among the highly educated members of the Yoruba community, there is nothing to suggest any kind of contradicting opinion with the reactionary forces within the populace. The slogan that anything that touches a single individual of Yoruba decent affects all within the society remained a rallying point. The role of ethno-cultural associations in the politics of the Yoruba is with no doubt on the high side. Adebisi explained that,

“the success of parties formed in Yoruba homeland is dependent on the cultural consciousness and desire of the people to retain and maintain ideas they feel rightly serve their collective interest.”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Emmanuel O. Ezeani is a Professor of Political Science responding during an interview in his office at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Interview on the 29/11/2010

2. Solomon Adebisi, is a school teacher in Abeokuta, Interview on the 24/10/2010

In the same direction of ethno-cultural consciousness as attached to political relevance of the Yoruba, the Governor of the federal State of Osun charged participants drawn from several towns and Associations within the Yoruba homeland that,

“the verdict is that, if Yorubaland should go down, Nigeria has no hope of redemption. The converse is that, if the Yoruba nation does not brace up, it stands the risk of going down with Nigeria as fate continues to push it towards the precipice.”<sup>3</sup>

In his bid to further prove that the Yoruba did care more about their individual ethnic survival than say, the country Nigeria. Like most other eminent people of Yoruba decent, he went further to say that,

“But in our own case, we constitute a nation but not a nation-state, since there is no political sovereignty; neither do we have autonomous political existence. There is no dishonour, however, if we seek to advance our cause as a group.”<sup>4</sup>

Another Yoruba Statesman, and a former Governor in one of the Yoruba states in the west of Nigeria, charged the Yoruba, while trying to distinguish his Party from other parties on a campaign trail, he said that,

“but we’re not Labour Party because the real Obafemi Awolowo party in the South West is ACN, the party with same ideology of Pa. Adekunle Ajasin, Adebayo Adefarati and, of course, Bola Tinubu”<sup>5</sup>

Chief Bisi Akande went further to say that,

“The only way to get the kind of government currently in Lagos today is to vote ACN, not the party that paraded betrayers of these great men of Yorubaland that have made us proud and pacesetters in all sectors of life”<sup>6</sup>

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3 - 4. See the Nation Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition; Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola is the Governor of Osun State, one of the Federal States within Yorubaland

5 - 6. See the Nation Newspapers, Nigeria, Online Edition; *Chief Bisi Akande is a former Governor of Ondo State, and presently the National Chairman of one of the Opposition Parties in Nigeria, the Action Congress of Nigeria.*

The superior feelings, as always exhibited by the Yoruba are only traceable on the pages of Newspapers. Because they have never succeeded in occupying the Seat of Government at the federal level on account of their self acclaimed political know how. As noted before, the only period a democratically elected President of Yoruba extraction ruled the country was between 1999 and 2007. And it was possible through a political Party that could best be regarded as a National Party. Besides their antagonistic postures against other ethnic nationalities, particularly the people of Igbo extraction, has denied them the partnership they probably could have derived from a political understanding with the Igbo. But they only ended up alienating themselves from the Igbo. The political acrimony between the Yoruba and the Igbo southern partners put an end to any political understanding with the Igbo ethnic group that best provides them the necessary partner in the business of democratic politics in Nigeria.

The Igbo Apex socio-cultural organisation, the Ohaneze Nd'igbo has no political connection in the democratic dispensation in the country. The body does not involve itself in the affairs of the registered political parties in the Igbo homeland and outside the geographical area. The Organisation never interfered politically in the region; neither does it influence the political Interest of some Igbo Men and Women until 2011 general election. The Year 2011 is an exceptional year, in the sense that the Ohaneze Nd'igbo openly supported and instructed the people of Igbo extraction to vote massively for the candidature of President Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan. Different Town Unions were mobilised and psychologically prepared to cast their ballot for the President. Ironically, the Igbo were persuaded to cast their ballot but not for the Party on which platform he is contesting, but rather as an Individual from their geographical area. Reason given was that the President by extension is an Igbo, since he hails from the eastern region. This is explicitly playing an ethnic card.

#### **10.2.1. Ethnic Associations and Politicians in Nigeria.**

Every Individual politician by extension belongs to the Cultural Association of his ethnic group or region. Nobody is exceptional. Each political conscious person depends heavily on the political opinion of his ethnic umbrella body to articulate his political ideas. No single politician, be it either from the Igbo, Yoruba, or the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, goes into National politics with the National political



consciousness as his motivating factor. People from the three ethnic groups go into the National politics on account that they are going for political war on behalf of their ethnic regions.

It is a common thing to see an individual boasting after winning a National election that he will be going to the central government to fight for his constituency. Instead of placing the interest of the entire nation above every other interest, political actors from these three groups end up setting up contentious political environment. The simple mindset of most of the elected politicians at the national level, revolved around a single denominator. And that is the argument that Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani are different people. Each has a distinct human characteristic.

Besides, the ethnic Associations serve as the conscience of the Tribal groups. Both active politicians and the non active ones rely heavily on the advice of the ethnic Associations. The Associations are viewed as the spiritual organ of the ethnic Groups. They provide the symbolic features needed in unifying the various towns and villages within the ethnic enclaves, as well as the Natives. And this includes also Natives resident outside the region.

It has become a political tradition for people seeking elective position in the Government to traverse the country, meeting with people who also hail from their local communities but resident in such towns and cities. Politicians always travel around seeking endorsement from various community organisations. The practice is not limited to politicians to any one single ethnic group. It cuts across the three ethnic groups under study in this Thesis.

### **10.3. Democratic Elections: The Dilemma of ethnic political battle in Nigeria.**

National elections are usually fought along ethnic lines both within and outside the ethnic enclaves. In every election period, the ethnic nationalities usually develop a mindset that propels everything the group intend to embark on during the election. The position of the ethnic group always formed the bedrock or Foundation of the group bargaining with any political Party, or their resolve to vote largely for any particular candidate during the election.

As noted before, the Yoruba ethnic group had penchant for changing political direction, particularly if they perceived any possible political disadvantage to their course, or if they have the fear that, the reality on the ground does not guarantee them any tangible position in the government. But one fact remained dominant, and that is the fact that the Yoruba always chose to go into opposition whenever anybody of their ethnic group is not at the top echelon of the Government, or has no chance of being possible person to emerge as the president. The Yoruba are known for forming her own political identity, without recourse to any of Igbo, or Hausa-Fulani political class. They usually formed their regional party and thereafter recruit people from other ethnic nationalities to make it appear national.

The only time the Yoruba identify politically with the centre was when one of their own, in the personality of the former President, Olusegun Obasanjo. At his first tenure from 1999-2003, the Yoruba voted against him. This was simply because of the fact that he was not of the regional Party, the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The Alliance for Democracy won all available and contestable political position in the Yorubaland. Olusegun Obasanjo was made President largely on the strength of votes the Party received from the Hausa-Fulani politically dominated northern region, and the Igbo dominated eastern region. Without the votes recorded in the two regions of the Igbo, and the Hausa-Fulani, Olusegun Obasanjo would not have won the 1999 general election.

Then in 2003 general election, the Yoruba decided to honour their own person this time. They voted for the Party of Olusegun Obasanjo massively. The Peoples Democratic Party won all Seats within the Yorubaland except Lagos State. They did this as a sign of solidarity and not because the Yoruba wanted to belong to the mainstream politics of the country. They believed that with Olusegun Obasanjo, a Yoruba, occupying the Office of President of the country; symbolically represent the overall Interest of the Yoruba race. And therefore proves the authority of the Yoruba over the other ethnic groups in the country.

But living true to their character, after the Presidential tenure of Olusegun Obasanjo in 2007, the Yoruba began to detach their involvement in the government of the centre. Then, before the tenure of Government of the man who their Son installed as

the President could elapse, the Yoruba regional Party the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) once again succeeded in taking control of the federal states in Yorubaland. Their total detachment was done in 2011 National election. The Action Congress of Nigeria, like the previous Action Group (AG), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) won virtually every available political position in the region. The political choice of the Yoruba to always go into the opposition each time they failed to control national government does not speak well about the prospect of democratic politics in the country. It is assumed that the Yoruba are politically arrogant and ethnic minded. Majority of the Yoruba, do not like being in a situation, where they would not have strong influence on decisions made.

The Igbo on the other side of the Niger River exhibit almost the same characteristics as the Yoruba. The Igbo, unlike the Yoruba, do not mind working with any group irrespective of political leaning. Since 1999, the Igbo have been in the mainstream politics in Nigeria. They have solidly identify with the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) both at the State level and at the National Level. According to Udensi,

“the Igbo are known for Consensus building, they are never afraid to confront others and they are not known for politics of convenience”<sup>7</sup>

He was of the opinion that the Yoruba have refused to evolve a different political approach since the demise of their political symbol in the personality of Late Jeremiah Obafemi Awolowo. But then, the Yoruba are not left alone. The Igbo also play the ethnic game in politics. In every election period, the general question and agitation is always the chance for someone of Igbo extraction to occupy a certain political office at the National Level. The question of competence and reliability of the individual is never discussed. Everyone always claim to be the best hand for the Office or most suitable for consideration. Just like in other ethnic nations of the Yoruba or the Hausa-Fulani. Anybody so considered for appointment carries not only the burden of the Job, but also the entire expectation of his ethnic group. And so, it becomes extremely difficult and an unnecessary distraction to such an individual. Thus limiting his focus and resolve and thereby restraining him from discharging his duty effectively and efficiently. Being republican in nature, the Igbo person does not

believe that he is politically accountable to anybody. There is the feeling of equality in opinion and opportunity.

However there is a strong bond of solidarity among the Igbo. Once there is a resolve to achieve anything of common value, the Igbo man is always ready to fight till the last man standing. Since the icon of Nigerian Nationalist past to the great beyond, the Igbo have been identifying with the politics at the centre. The Igbo have been voting massively for the ruling Party. In 1999 the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won in all the federal states within Igboland, and indeed the entire eastern region.

The Hausa-Fulani has continually dominated the political landscape. But this is not as a result of the Hausa-Fulani being in the majority. The majority of the Hausa-Fulani have been identifying with the National Party and they have been fortunate to always form the majority in the leadership hierarchy of the ruling party. But then the ability of the Hausa-Fulani to source for partners outside their regional has been a strong tool to their political successes.

While the Yoruba are always busy repudiating the Hausa-Fulani political prowess, but they could not bend low to play along with Igbo ethnic group. And for the fact that there is no ethnic ranking between the Igbo and the Yoruba, and indeed in Nigeria, the Yoruba ought to have devised another political philosophy. They regard the Hausa-Fulani as being politically primitive, and cannot be considered as political equal.

#### **10.4. Dilemma of Ethnic Governors forum.**

One of the effects of unregulated democratic politics, is the tendency of every group organising themselves into an institution. People do not care, if the association they are forming has any legal backing or not. Worse still, nobody has deemed it necessary to challenge the legality of this Governors Forum. But being the Chief Security Officer of their various States, the Governors are more in a position to know that they are appropriating illegality in the country. The democratic governance in Nigeria is anchored on many factors. But then there is the factor of associations. The political associations are not formed on the basis of political Party membership. The

Governors used the Association to create an Institution that poses challenges to other state institutions. The existence of the Governors forum raised many questions among the members of the civil society. Some people like this Author have tried to fathom out the essence of this Association, or better still, the relevance of the forum in the general wellbeing of the populace, without any tangible answer.

In the Northern region of the country, there is the Northern Governors forum. The Forum comprises the Governors of the 19 federal states in the region. This is irrespective of party affiliation, and also irrespective of religious belief of a State Governor. The Governors use the forum to discuss issues which affect their geopolitical zones in absence of Governors from other parts of Nigeria, and it is usually done with regard to their relationship with other two parts of the country, namely the Igbo, the Yoruba or the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern region as the case may be.

Within the body, they arrive at political ideas and draw up positions that will guide them during the enlarged meeting of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) comprising all the federal states, as well as the former living Head of states and Government. The geopolitical Governors Forum is a political platform used by the Governors of the various zones to checkmate each others' ethnic Zones in the country.

#### **10.4.1            Governors Forum and the future of Democracy in Nigeria.**

The Governors forum as enunciated before does not have any legal framework to support the existence of the body, and the functions and roles it plays in the political calculation of the country. The Governors forum wields a superlative power and political influence in Nigeria. The Governors in their respective states control the entire machinery of their political parties. They are usually above the Party in their various states. The political parties are so structured that the Party Executive in the states functions at the mercy of the Governor. Those who control the parties in the states are somewhat under the control and influence of the Governor. They are usually the Governor's subordinates and supporters. The Governor has the power to nominate the Party Chairman as well as the Secretary in the states. By allocating to themselves the power to appoint the Party executives at the state level, they implicitly

hold the power to suspend or to sack any recalcitrant Official, who might want to oppose or confront the Governor.

Apart from controlling their parties at the state level, they as well hold the faith of anybody who so wish to become the Presidential candidate of their parties. They succeed in making the National executive of their parties to concede to them the power to determine who qualifies as a Party delegate during the nomination of candidates for the various contestable positions in the country. Ordinarily, it is whoever the Governors supported that becomes the Party standard bearer. This is based on the fact that the Governors control the delegates. About 90 Percent of the total delegates are people under the direct control or supervision of the Governor.

It is in this respect that the House of Representatives chairman on Media and Public Affairs, Honourable Esemé Eyiboh raised the alarm on the enormous power wielded by these state governors in Nigeria. The Legislator lamented that the Governors are all operating as democratic emperors. But in real terms the 36 state Governors have been ruling with military fiat and mentality thereby undermining democracy by obstructing the process of free, fair and credible elections in the country. This action is actualised through their domineering power and control of the Party machinery in their states. The 36 state Governors could be likened to pseudo-democratic emperors who arrogate to themselves the extra-democratic powers of dispensing discretions instead of the law.

According to Dr. Iro Uke, the overbearing influence of the federal state Governors has significantly contributed in painting the Nigerian political scene as a helpless one<sup>8</sup>. He accused some of the Governors of sitting in the Government House and all alone decides who occupies what office, dissolve or suspend the leadership of the direct elected local governments within their states, and in addition control the machinery of their political parties in their various states.

But such power wielding officials and the attendant conflict that goes with it, does not provide the country the chance and impulse to move to the next level in the effort to entrench a stronger democratic system. All these put together are complete anti democratic norms. In his stark condemnation of the roles attributed to the Governors

of the federal states, or rather the power they have allocated to themselves, Parliamentarian Eseme Eyiboh lamented that,

“Our state governors are not different from feudal monarchs who have defied all forms of democratic practices. It is only in Nigeria that a governor would draw out the list of senators, members of the House of Representatives, members of state Houses of Assembly, local government chairmen and executive committees of the parties at all levels within the comfort of his bedroom. In fact, local government chairmen are appointed and removed at will by the governors in the most undemocratic manner. Their tenures are decided by the governors instead of the law.”<sup>9</sup>

This throws more light on the frustration most Nigerians are feeling about the activities of the state Governors. The overbearing influence of some of the federal state Governors, irrespective of ethnic affiliation painted a bad picture of democratic Governance in the minds of the public. But giving Democracy bad impression through the activities of the elected officials is a self inflicted Injury.

Nevertheless the suspected determination of the elected Governors not to allow anybody to have superior opinion and political influence within the federal states they presided, support the charge, that their actions are nothing but only that of self fulfilling.

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7. Albert Udensi is a resident of Enugu, interview on the 24/05/2009.

8. Dr. Iro I Uke is a Lecturer of Politics at the University of Abuja, Interview on the 08/06/2009

9. *Eseme Eyiboh is a Parliamentarian of the Federal House of Representatives. See Tribune Newspaper, Online Edition 07/03/2011*

Politics in Nigeria is strictly based on the locality an individual hails from. Where an individual was born does not stand as criteria for qualification to participate as a candidate during elections. The term son of the soil is the most important qualification an individual politician must possess so as to qualify to contest successfully for electoral Office in any of the three ethnic nations in Nigeria. Even within the same ethnic nation, an individual will have to return to his Ancestral homeland to actualise his political ambition.

The Homeland criterion has no respect of anybody's wealth, or personality. To contest for an electoral Office in an alien environment, other than the natural Community of the individual, the interested person is usually made to understand from day one that such adventure is a failure. Individuals are made to return home and sell their candidacy to their local communities. Politically, it is only in their communities that their values are critically evaluated and measured.

An instance is the Governor of the federal state of Osun in the Yoruba South West of Nigeria. That is Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola. The Man was formerly a Commissioner in Lagos State. But despite his political sojourn in Lagos as a Government appointee, he was made to return to his native Community and seek for a political office. He contested and he won the election for the Office of the Governor. Another individual in this category is Dr Kayode Fayemi, the Governor of Ekiti State. Like Rauf Aregbesola, Dr Kayode Fayemi was equally a former Commissioner in Lagos State.

A political party may appoint anybody into the executive arm of the government in a state the party controls, but such political involvement begins and ends at such capacity. It is very evident that the moment an alien politician decided to contest for any political post, then, such an individual must return to his biological and ancestral village. This happened to the people mentioned above, and to also many other people. The homeland factor states that an interested individual must hail naturally from the area he intends to contest to represent. But as terrific as it may be, it is not an action made out of discrimination; rather it is based on the principle of In-group



solidarity. However the natives or indigenes that formed majority in the political setup always cease every opportunity, and exclude the non natives.

The homeland issue in Nigeria has remained as one of the stringent factors that democratic politics revolves around. The right for homeland is not given by mere statutes. An individual cannot claim to be from a particular locality, if he cannot prove his biological connection to the area. Number of years spent in such area does not matter and it does not count in any way. Under a democratic setting, one would expect issues like this to be resolved by an act of parliament. But the inability of the national Lawmakers to change the old tradition of a citizen not qualifying as an indigene creates this constitutional dilemma in the country. The right to claim origin of any place in the country is dependent on natural inheritance. The biological father of an individual must be a natural subject of the said area. An individual born in Lagos to Igbo parents cannot see or regard Lagos to be his homeland. He cannot also see himself as an indigene of Lagos. The natural Law of the Land does not recognise him as a Lagos indigene. Not even the federal law recognises him as an indigene of any other area, other than the town or village of his biological father. So, the natural law that abound in the three ethnic regions create the homeland factor. The Constitution of the country also grants credence to the ethnic homeland facto in the appropriation of indigene and citizens claims.

In this light, every individual regard his fathers village and compound as his real homeland. A Hausa-Fulani person in Lagos, an Igbo person in Kaduna, or a Yoruba in Owerri, will always remember that he is from another place. Such an individual will always have the feeling that he does not belong to that strange environment. Within the inner self of the individual, he will always believe that he is not acceptable to the society, though there may be no hostility against his person, but he will surely return to his ancestral home, should he want to go into politics. It is a tradition and norm created that has defied law making and democratic principles. Thus, nobody is to be blamed for the consistence of the nature created situation in the country. It is not a tradition obtainable only in one ethnic region, nor is it a creation of chance; rather it is simply a natural phenomenon. Nobody is measured on the basis of his individual well being only, but by the well being of his ethnic group, as well as the well being of his ethnic homeland.

11. **Structural Impediments and Democracy in Nigeria.**

There is no society without impediments. Sometimes human made, and sometimes nature created. But the gravity of the human created impediments is so dependent on the structure of society. In Nigeria and like in some other hitherto existing complex societies, some of these impediments seem to have defied solutions. Yes, they are created by man, but now seem to be beyond human solutions. According to the architects of the now human imposed hindrances to the proper development of the Nigerian state, which is contained in the federal constitution of Nigeria under the name of federal character, it was to help cushion the fear of marginalisation and dominance by any ethnic group or nationality.

Several political measures were introduced by the government in order to make every ethnic group in the country to have a sense of belonging. These measures were the creation of the military as well as the civilian administrations. Perhaps they do not believe that it could lead the country to a stagnant level in terms of deployment of her human resources to a maximum utilisation. Many years after the introduction of the federal character, there is no practical thing available to prove the relevance of the system. The reasons for the introduction of the system have remained unabated. Politicians used the windows and instrument of the programme to settle those who probably assisted them achieve success at the polls.

The system is not used to reward excellence, or merit. People are employed through the instruments provided by the system, and often on the basis of party patronage, and connection, and certainly not through qualification by merit. Despite the system being in operation, it does not prevent some of the officials overseeing the implementation of the programme short-changing certain people, or certain ethnic nationalities; depending on who is in charge of the programme. This is done through the employment of people from other states and geopolitical zones into job spaces meant for another federal state or geopolitical zone. Through the system, the country has been denied the opportunity of deploying the best of her brains in the national

service, as many of these brains have been lost to the application of the federal character.

Yes, the intention for the introduction of the federal character may be great, but the fact is that it limited the use of merit and capability in the deployment of the human resources available for injection into the system. Another implication is the fact that the various ethnic groups see it as a given chance to have a share in the national cake. Then, individuals who are more qualified, and people who have lots to offer for the country are relegated or dumped by the side, on the account that their zone has excess people. This is exactly what happened in the ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) after the April 2011 national elections in the country.

Through the principles of the federal character, the party decided to zone the principal offices in the administration to the various geopolitical zones in the country. Instead of applying the principle of merit, the party decided to stick to the federal character. In this case, the region with the least members in the federal House of Representatives was asked to produce the speaker of the house. The issue of ranking in the tenure of the members of Parliament elected under the platform of the ruling Party (PDP) was relegated to the dustbin, and also as a sacrifice to ethnic consideration. As practiced in other Presidential democracies, the highest ranking member of the political party with the highest number of elected parliamentarians is usually made the speaker of the parliament. In the case of Nigeria, it is not who has stayed longer in the parliament that matters but what ethnic group or religious affiliation the individual belongs to. The principle of federal character and zoning negates everything that speaks for development of democratic politics in Nigeria.

The party officials and other prominent members of the party were supportive of a candidate of Yoruba extraction from the western region of the country, but the members of the Parliament were of different thinking. In fact a political direction that is totally different from that of the ruling party executive. The members of the Lower House voted and elected somebody from the ethnic Hausa-Fulani stock as the Speaker of the House. That was done in total disregard of the federal character the President and his supporters were struggling to reinvent, but the breaching of the party constitution by the President himself contributed immensely in truncating the

principle of federal character and zoning as entrenched in both the federal Constitution and also the party constitution. However the action of the members of House of Representative to disapprove the political calculation of the ruling party could be viewed as a way of asserting the independence of the Lower House against the executive arm of the government. But that could also be described as an ethnic influenced political calculation.

### **11.1. Federal Character**

Like in every human society, there are measures used to run the affairs of the society. Such measures are usually meant for the good of the people within the given society. Some of the measures could be in form of Bye-laws, Laws enacted by act of Parliament, or laws promulgated by a government and or as approved by the citizens, as well as traditions and customs. In Nigeria, the principle of “Federal Character” was introduced into the Constitutional framework of the country. According to Section 14 (3) of the 1999 Constitution:

“The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies.”<sup>1</sup>

Every business of the Government is strictly based on the provision of that aspect of the Constitution of the Country. But the fact remains that this constitutional provision is no longer compatible with democratic norms. The concept of federal character as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution in any case appears to be out of democratic politics. This is so because it partitioned the country into qualified and not qualified individuals and sections. Then it implies that unless an individual falls within the selected part of the society, such an individual would end up not getting mentioned.

### 11.1.2.

### Quota System.

This is a system designed to make sure that every part of the country is equally represented in the business of the Nigerian State. It provides that no part or section of the Nigerian state will feel short-changed, or disadvantaged in the selection or recruitment of people into federal government Agencies. And as intended, the system was to create conducive atmosphere, whereby every section and indeed every ethnic community within the state of Nigeria would feel a sense of belonging. But this system is not a new invention; it has been in existence in the country. It is an inheritance bequeathed on the country by the colonial masters.

The use of Quota in the national life of the country is one problem militating against the development and deepening of democracy in the country. Apart from serving as an instrument used to divide the Igbo, the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani, and making them believe that they are separate and different from each other; the use of Quota system distorts the administrative structure as well. The system of governance is not competence driven. The room for merit and capability is so affected by the negative effect of the application of the Quota system in the country. In most cases, individuals are not giving administrative responsibilities because of their knowledge in the field.

Many people are giving positions on account that they are from a particular ethnic region. Unqualified persons are sometimes assigned duties that they have no capacity to control. In the process, such an assignment ends up not receiving the very attention it needed to become a success. Because of the Quota system many Government Agencies are staffed with wrong persons. With such administrative structure in personnel, then the attendant problems as well as the overall output of the Agency cannot amaze anybody.

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1. See the 1999 federal constitution of Nigeria, section 14(1) and (3) of the 1999 constitution, which said that “the composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity.

More disturbing is the fact that the Quota system is not limited to only academic qualification and competence, but included also religious balancing. Where the head of an agency is a Christian, then chances are that the deputy or second to the head will ultimately be a Muslim. So, in the deployment of Personnel, the religious affiliation of the selected is highly considered. The possible output from an individual is in most cases not rated. The system does not encourage hard work, merit and dedication. According to a senior staff in one of the federal agencies in Enugu,

“the use of Quota system in the country limits the chances for merit, and professionalism in the government own agencies. The competence level of the people employed is not measurable, because in trying to involve everybody or to satisfy every interest, merit as a yardstick has to be relaxed, so as to accommodate everybody”<sup>2</sup>

What this implies is that the structure of the country is not based on competence and capacity to deliver, but based on a logic that perpetually divides the people. Being a structural hindrance, the quota system is supportive of mediocrity and the division of the people on ethnic as well as on regional lines. But no matter how well the system may have been projected to function in the society, the fact remains that it restricted the full deployment of capable hands that would have set the country on the development path. The presence of the quota system in the country’s national life represents official recognition and promotion of the ethnic divide between the Yoruba, the Igbo, and the Hausa-Fulani.

### **11.1.3. Zoning Formula.**

In a bid to replicate what the Constitution provided in detailing how the various ethnic nationalities in the country are to be accommodated, the political parties in their wisdom designed the federal character and quota system to represent the backbone of their parties. In every stable Political environment, policies enacted at the central level of government are usually meant for downward implementation at the component levels. Such policies are never meant to be used as a destabilising factor. Instead, what is happening in the case of Nigeria is that, whatever policy taken at the

central level of government, is negatively interpreted and negatively implemented in the component units.

This administrative scenario thus impacts negatively on the democratic process in Nigeria. At the federal level, the policy of quota system in national life of the country was introduced. It was meant for equal representation of the various ethnic units in the Nigerian federation. Then, this policy and process at the federal level were transferred to the component units, whereby component units were divided even where such idea was not necessary.

The use of quota in the distribution of political offices and in other government agencies creates a huge impediment for the policies meant for the advancement of democratic politics in Nigeria. It thus negates the principle of merit in place of mediocrity. This is so because, it allows or create a situation whereby more qualified individuals are rejected or left behind on the account that the quota meant for their part of the country has been exhausted, in that vein they are shut out from the system.

The idea or the policy of quota system does not provide for equal level of qualification of aspirants, rather it creates a situation for equal representation of ethnic identities. By design, it does not provide an equal quality of men and women expected to control the affairs of the nation. So, structurally, it creates a perpetual and permanent division of the people of Nigeria.

The policy of quota in every aspect of administration in the country creates room for the zoning system, whereby political positions, policy consideration and policy implementation are tailored along structural lines in the zones created by the politicians, even within the circle of the same local community. The principle of quota and zoning were gradually transferred to the regional sections of the country from the central government. Thus, the systemic division created at the national level became a factor at the regional level as well as in the federal states.

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*2. The Respondent is a Civil servant in the Ministry of Finance Enugu, She was responding to the present political development in the country, with regard to zoning of political offices by the PDP.*

Instead of creating an enabling political environment, it only succeeded in dividing the country along ethnic and regional lines. By this design, the politicians seized the opportunity created by the principle of quota and zoning system in the polity, and make political capital out of it. The system does render democratic process in Nigeria useless. This is so because the political process is no longer determined by quality and merit, but by the idea of Power-shift or rotation of political power through this systemic structure of zoning.

The zoning policy presented also functional challenges, as no democracy can succeed, if the democratic elements in the political environment are divided. This is done in Nigeria through a systemic division of the polity and through systemic apportioning of political responsibility by the use of quota system as well as the zoning structure. The Systemic structures of quota and zoning relegate the democratic principles to the dustbin, as qualified individuals are restricted and not given the opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

#### **11.1.4. The Principle of Federal Character and Dilemma of Zoning System.**

The federal character policy as enunciated in the federal Constitution of Nigeria was tailored to create an atmosphere of inclusiveness among the various ethnic groups in the country. As a cardinal point by which the country is divided through the various political offices at the federal level, the policy itself has been entrenched in every aspect of the national life. There is no single political decision ever made without having the principle of Quota at the centre of discussion. Since the return to democratic governance in 1999, the policies in the country have been under the prescription of the quota system. Beginning with the office of the president, down to the office of the local Councillor in the local communities, the principle of quota is applied.

After the national election of April 2011, different ethnic groups as well as interest groups began to clamour to recognition under the cover of the federal character. A case in hand is the issue of the Speaker of House of Representatives. The lower chamber of the legislature, or better known as the Federal House of Representatives, has been in the news. As democratic tradition implies, the political party with the majority of the elected Legislators will produce the leaders of the House. The Peoples



Democratic Party (PDP) after emerging the party with majority in the house, decided to employ the policy of federal character, or designed in another way as Zoning.

But the debate presented an interesting political situation within the ruling party. The President rejected the Zoning of offices, when the party was to nominate candidates for the various offices before the April 2011 elections. The President and his group breached the section of their Party constitution that deals with the issue of Zoning. They claimed and declared the policy of Zoning in the party as dead. Ironically after the President won the election, they turned around to claim that the Zoning policy has resurrected. In the process of trying to reintroduce the policy of Zoning in the party, the President and the party national executive zoned the federal offices to the different geopolitical zones in the country.

In response to the zoning formula adopted by the Party, some members of the federal House of Parliament under the party Platform denounced the attempt to zone the office of the Speaker of the house to the Yoruba in the western region of the country. The argument adduced by some of the aggrieved members of the lower House was based on the premise that the party cannot suspend or breach the policy of federal character and elect the president, as against the party constitution which if followed would have produced somebody of northern extraction to stand as the party candidate. So, the effort of the president and the party executive to have somebody of Yoruba extraction to be elected the Speaker of the lower house was vehemently resisted by those members, who believed that there cannot be two rules in the party.

The issue was to become ethnic by interpretation. Prior to the election of the Leaders of the national Parliament, so many people jumped into the fray protesting against possible reduction of any ethnic group particularly the Yoruba to the status of spectators in the national politics. Prominent among the speakers is Frederick Fasehun, the founding leader of Odua Peoples Congress (OPC). This is a radical Yoruba group, seeking for the recognition of the Yoruba as a Nation within the state of Nigeria. Fasehun, in a statement, argued that taking away the post of the Speaker of House of Representatives from the Yoruba of South-West Nigeria violate the federal Character principle as enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution. The OPC leader questioned the rationale behind the argument of people agitating that the Speaker of

the House of Representatives be taken away from the South West. In his candid opinion, he stated that,

“If the Senate maintains status quo and the Senate President remains within the North-Central and the Deputy Senate President is retained in the East, then why should the South-West lose the Speaker? Maybe we should remind the nation too that the President legitimately comes from the South-South and the Vice President comes from the North-West. The exit of Honourable Oladimeji Bankole after May 29 leaves the South-West with virtually no share in government. We hope the powers-that-be will consider that the South-West Zone is too big and too politically important to be left out in the current scheme of things. The Federal Government should not allow the Yoruba people to think that they are being marginalised and pushed out of the Federal Government.”<sup>3</sup>

In the opinion of Dr. Frederick Fasehun, allocated political positions at the federal level as a tradition had always remained within the benefiting zones even when personalities occupying such posts changed. Following the argument of the Yoruba Leader, it is a created precedence that a political office at the federal level must remain in the region that occupies such office in the previous administrative. And that is, provided the tenure of the incumbent President is still valid. He tried to cite the two terms of Olusegun Obasanjo presidency, when people of Igbo extraction in the South-East held the position of Senate President in turns through Chiefs Evan Enwerem, Chuba Okadigbo, Anyim Pius Anyim and Kenneth Nnamani, while Honourable Ghali Na’abba and Aminu Bello Masari from the North-West replaced Alhaji Salisu Buhari from the North-West for the position of Speaker, as evidence to support his argument for the retention of the office of the Speaker of the federal house by somebody of Yoruba extraction. He did this by stating that;

“against such precedent, a Yoruba man should naturally replace Dimeji Bankole, a Yoruba man, as Speaker for the House of Representatives. And any zone planning to contest the Speaker’s seat with the South-West should better be futuristic and proactive in their ambition because they might need Yoruba backing for something really big down the line.”<sup>4</sup>

But then, not everybody is buying into the argument of this nature. One of those who fought passionately for the retention of this policy within the ruling Peoples

Democratic Party (PDP), the former military President, in the person of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, was utterly disappointed by the angling of the party leadership to resuscitate Zoning that was proclaimed to be dead in the ruling party. But against this development, some people argued that the Yoruba have gone back to their usual opposition status.

Although lots of people may want to question the constitutionality of the new political configuration in the country, especially with regard to section 14 (3) of the 1999 federal constitution, which provides for the principles of Federal Character, and which was perfectly designed to avoid a situation where people of a zone could perpetuate itself in government on the expense of others. However the reality of this new configuration is that the Yoruba will not be represented in the top echelon of political decision from 2011 till 2015.

But the situation is not new or strange to the Yoruba. In all the democratic dispensation that Nigeria has gone through, the Yoruba or the people of South-West of Nigeria have always remained in the Opposition. The breach of the principle of representation by the party leaders as against what the Party Constitution prescribed tainted whatever reason the leadership of the ruling party would want to advance. But one strong truth remained that, the principle of federal character as applied in the field of governance restricted the deployment of the best heads and the best hands of people who would have contributed immensely in the development of the country.

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3. and 4. Frederick Fasehun is the founding leader of the Odua Peoples Congress, a Yoruba pressure group. See *Daily Champion Newspapers*, [www.champion.com](http://www.champion.com), Online Edition, Caption: *House of Reps' Speaker: Keep Off; OPC warns non-Yoruba zones*, 19/05/2011

#### **11.1.5. Ethnic struggle and democratic Politics in Nigeria.**

An interesting aspect of the Quota and zoning system as being canvassed by some individuals within the political class is the election of Aminu Waziri Tambuwal from the Northwest geopolitical zone of the country as the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives, and also in defiance of the President and the executive of the ruling party directive. The President and the ruling party officials decided to zone the office to the Yoruba region of the South west of the country. This they did without taking into consideration the acceptability level of this plan among the majority of the party members.

The new political reality as presented by the emergence of Hon Aminu Waziri Tambuwal changes the power configuration at the federal level. The new reality in term of power structure in the country is heavily tilted against the Yoruba South west of the country. Despite the fact that the ruling political party had the intention of having an administrative structure where each of the six geopolitical zones will have a stake or position at the highest level of decision making in the country.

But the political configuration produced through the actions of the members of the federal House of Representatives, upset the above power structure as designed by the ruling party. The new development created a power configuration that presents the Northwest or the Hausa-Fulani homeland and also the South East the home of the Igbo, as the two major beneficiaries of the new power equation.

The new power equation as presented by the political realities on the ground, simply meant that the South-West geopolitical zone or the Yoruba Homeland will not be represented by anybody of Yoruba extraction in the top six political positions in the country. Certainly this is the first time the Yoruba will be out of the power equation since the return to democratic politics in 1999. According to Chief Ayo Adebajo, a chieftain of the pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group, Afenifere, while lamenting on the sordid political situation the Yoruba will endure for the next four years in the country said;

“the North has taken the only position left for the Yoruba, in all the arms of government, we are nowhere to be found; the Yoruba has been relegated to the background. We have no say and we have no protection when decisions that concerns development are being taken”.<sup>5</sup>

All said and done, nobody is talking about the ability to deliver the much needed dividend of democracy to the ordinary men and women in the street. An issue that was to be viewed on the premise of ability to deliver was turned into an ethnic shout. However the Yoruba were also wrong to demand for a prominent role in the formed government, if the outcome of the April 2011 election was to be based on the performance of the ruling party in the regions.

As narrated before, the party was only able to have 6 members in the two Chambers of Senate and the House of Representatives, who were of Yoruba extraction. The entire federal states in the South-West voted against the ruling party during the April 2011 election for the federal Parliament. Yes, the party executive decided and agreed to zone the office of the Speaker of Federal House of Representatives to the South-West, but members elected from other zones rebelled against this decision. Many regarded such decision to amount to rewarding failure. They argued that the South-West divorced itself from the main stream politics to that of regional politics by their rejection of the ruling party.

The effect of the new political configuration in the country is the sudden rise of ethnic political consciousness as displayed by the Yoruba. Then, the secret anger being expressed by the Yoruba was not even directly directed to the Hausa/Fulani, but to the Igbo. The argument was that, the Igbo facilitated the denial of the Yoruba South-West any prominent role in the government formed after the election of April 2011. Their argument was also based on the fact that the elected members of the party, who were of Igbo extraction, rained heavy criticism on the person of the former President Olusegun Obasanjo. It was argued by the elected Parliamentarians that the former President was anti-Igbo, and so they insisted that the position of the House Speaker can never be zoned to the South-West. And as the Yoruba decided to vote against the party, then, they cannot be a party to a decision that reward failure.

Another effect is that the South-West no longer belongs to the main stream politics in Nigeria. Within the South-West region, the regional party is in control of the political affairs, but at the federal level, they assumed the old status of the Yoruba in Nigerian politics. But leaders of the Action Congress of Nigeria in the region argued that their 8 years in the mainstream politics in Nigeria did not yield any dividend of democracy to them. Then to the members of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the exclusion of the Yoruba from holding any of the top positions in the government was of little importance to them. On a final note, it would be concluded that there are three major factors that combined to shut the Yoruba out of the power equation for the elected government billed to run from May 2011 to May 2015.

The first causal factor is the bad blood between the Igbo and the former President Olusegun Obasanjo. It is not a hidden secret that majority of the Igbo hate Olusegun Obasanjo with passion. Their reason stemmed from the fact that Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo was a major player during the Biafran-Nigerian civil war 30<sup>th</sup> May 1967 to 13<sup>th</sup> January 1970. Apart from the not too good political relationship between the Igbo and the Yoruba, there is a clear mindset among the Igbo that Olusegun Obasanjo, and significant number of Yoruba hated the Igbo. Many people of Igbo extraction believed that Olusegun Obasanjo despised any Igbo progress.

But findings proved that the support of Igbo members of the Parliament to the election of Aminu Waziri Tambuwal as the new Speaker of the Parliament was not hinged on the negative mindset the Igbo have against the person of Olusegun Obasanjo, or other existing or non existing Yoruba leaders, but purely on the ability to deliver, and as well as the need to stop the party from rewarding failure with political positions. Many people who contributed to this question in Enugu agreed with the decision of the elected Lawmakers to reject the party plan. The Table 11.1 below shows the outcome of the respondents' opinion.

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5. Ayo Adebajo is a Chieftain of the Yoruba Socio-cultural Association, the Afenifere. See *National Mirror Newspaper*, [www.nationalmirroronline.com](http://www.nationalmirroronline.com). Online Edition, Caption: Adebajo, Babatope bemoan South-West's loss of Speakership, 07/06/2011

Questionnaire Interview in Enugu. Total number of respondents: 72.

A: Do you agree with the decision of the H-R members to reject the plan of the ruling party by electing a non Yoruba member as the House Speaker?		B: Do you see the decision of the Igbo members of the HR to vote for a non Yoruba as Speaker to be a pay back to Olusegun Obasanjo?	
I agree	25	I agree	8
I disagree	4	I disagree	24
I don't know	6	I don't know	3
Total respondents	35	Total respondents	35

Table: 11.1 showing the responses of participants on the issue of the House Speaker in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011).

When asked about their opinion on the face off between the Peoples Democratic Party leadership and members of the House of Representative elect, total of 25 respondents from 35 participants agreed that the House of Representative members were right by rejecting the plan of the ruling party leadership to impose somebody on the House as the speaker. While only 4 respondents out of the 35 participants submitted that they disagreed with the decision of members of the parliament elected on the platform of the ruling party to reject the plan of their party leadership. However, when the same set of participants were given another opportunity to confirm if the decision of the members of the Parliament who are of Igbo extraction, to reject the idea of selecting a member of Yoruba extraction as the House Speaker was to ridicule Olusegun Obasanjo, 24 respondents out of 35 participants disagreed that it was a pay-back to the former President, while 8 respondents agreed that it was actually a pay-back by House members elect of Igbo extraction to Olusegun Obasanjo for his hate against the Igbo. If the opinions of respondents in Enugu are to be relied upon, then, the people if given the opportunity will do away with the system of zoning in the national politics of the country.

Then another development that further dented the suitability of the system as established in the Constitution of Peoples Democratic party is the breach of the Zoning policy of the ruling party, by which some individuals aided the emergence of

Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan as the party candidate during the April 2011 presidential election in the country. This was done in defiance of the existing clauses in the party constitution, especially Section 7 (C), which recognises zoning as a party policy. On the account of breaching the party constitution, and the subsequent presumed gang up by the state Governors against other contesting candidates, it was so argued that the pro-zoning forces in the party were responsible for the jettison of the zoning formula presented to her Party members in the Parliament by the party. Like some of the Lawmakers contented, there cannot be two sets of rules for members of the party. It was argued that since the President himself breached the zoning policy, then, there cannot be any reason to support the argument being advanced by the party leadership with regard to respecting the zoning policy.

The whole debate about the power configuration in Nigeria from May 2011 to May 2015 is deeply rooted in the decision of the president to contest the election of April 2011, even though the constitution of the party as designed gave the candidates from the Northern region the chance to contest for the presidency. So, majority of the Lawmakers in the lower Chamber felt that the party is double-speaking. Some contented that the party cannot declare the zoning policy as enshrined in the party constitution dead then allow the President to emerge as the party candidate in the election and now want to reintroduce the same zoning system.

The third factor is the desire of the opposition political parties in the lower chamber like the Action Congress of Nigeria, All Nigerian Peoples Party; Congress for Progressive Change, All Progressives Grand Alliance, and Labour party to whittle-down the influence of the ruling party leadership within the parliament. Besides, the Action Congress of Nigeria on its own aspires to checkmate the ruling party and to prevent the party from having any foothold again in Yorubaland. The members elected on the platform of Action Congress of Nigeria felt that, the only option left to them was to vote alongside the renegades from the ruling party, so as to scuttle the plan of the ruling party reintroducing the zoning system. The Action Congress of Nigeria felt also that working against the idea of the ruling party in trying to have Mulikat Akande-Adeola, a Yoruba Woman, and a Lawmaker-elect from Oyo State as the Speaker of the 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly, would present the party to the generality of



Nigerians as a National Party, and not a regional party as many people would want to believe. According to a senior member of the party in Abuja,

“Supporting or voting for the candidacy of Mulikat Akande-Adeola from the ruling party would have damaged the standing of the party in the country. This is because the action would have confirmed the argument of many people within the country that the party is a Yoruba party. So, the best option for the party was to vote against the ruling party candidate, and also with 2015 general election in mind. If our elected members in the Parliament had voted for Mulikat Akande-Adeola, a Yoruba, then our argument as a national party would have crashed before our eyes. So, to maintain our position, we decided to advise our members to vote against her candidacy as the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives”<sup>6</sup>

The outcome of the House election created a new dimension and focus in the power configuration of the country, with regard to ethnic loyalty. However the condemnation that trailed the decision of the Action Congress of Nigeria to vote against a Yoruba Woman Lawmaker as the Speaker of the Lower House emerged from different angles. The people of Yoruba extraction irrespective of party affiliation blamed the leadership of the ACN as well as the former President Olusegun Obasanjo for the political difficulty the Yoruba nation found itself in. But as the blame game lingers on, the fact remains that the majority of the Yoruba voted for a different direction, and they must have known the consequences of reverting to their old political order. Voting out the ruling party in their homeland was not a coincidence; rather it is the tradition of the Yoruba, to always oppose anything in the centre, when they are not directly involved.

Other geopolitical zones in the country voted moderately for the candidates of the ruling party in the April 2011 national election. In the Igbo homeland, about 80 percent of the elected federal Lawmakers from the zone are of the ruling party. The elected members of the ruling party from the region did mount pressure on the party executive to zone the Speaker position to the Igbo region on the account of support the party received from the zone. The support received by the party from people of Igbo extraction within and outside the eastern region informed the position of the elected Lawmakers from the zone in their rejection of the idea to zone the position of

the Speaker to the South-West region. This informed also their decision to join forces with elected Lawmakers from other ethnic regions to scuttle the decision of the ruling party.

The Northern region voted and elected many Lawmakers also on the platform of the ruling party. Considering the fact that this region of the country protested against the candidacy of President Goodluck Jonathan under the PDP platform, it was an opportunity for the aggrieved to tell the party that it was wrong to award the position of the Speaker to the South-West on the basis of zoning. Like Udenkwo rightly argued in his reaction to the rejection of Mulikat Akande-Adeola, the ruling party candidate for the Speaker position,

“it is so unfortunate to see an organisation that pride itself as the biggest political party in Africa, and which told the entire world some weeks ago, that Zoning no longer exists in the party, but only to come back weeks later to claim that the zoning which it jettisoned before the primary for the party Presidential candidate, still remained as part of the Party rules”<sup>7</sup>

The above Speaker like many other people who responded to the development in Parliament was deeply bemused on the criticisms coming from among the Yoruba. But then, the leadership of the ruling party was to be blamed for the new power configuration in the country. The actions of the party leadership painted them as a fraudulent set of people who cannot be trusted. Though, it is assumed that every politician is a liar, as they often engage in falsehood to win the sympathy of the public for their designed and desired objectives.

But knowing fully well that there are many of the party members, who were Pro-zoning, the party ought to have designed another formula on how to distribute the political offices to the various geopolitical zones in the country. Then, the Yoruba ought to have known that for the fact that former President Olusegun Obasanjo, a Yoruba, and as one among those who proclaimed zoning dead, was heavily disliked by not only the Hausa-Fulani, but also the Igbo. And this comes to what Adegoke said during an interview he granted a Nigerian Newspaper, where he accused the

Hausa-Fulani politically dominated Northern Nigeria of trying to force the Yoruba out of the mainstream politics of Nigeria<sup>8</sup>.

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6. *Alhaji Mahmud Bashir a senior official of Action Congress of Nigeria in Abuja. Interview on the 30/09/2011*

7. *Anselm Udenkwo is a social critic based in Enugu. He was responding to the emergence of a new House of Reps Speaker from the North West of Nigeria, and the new political configuration in the country. 08/10/2011*

8. *Chief Segun Adegoke is a frontline politician in Ondo State, lawyer, and also a strong member of the Afenifere, See Compass Newspaper Nigeria, [www.compassnewspaper.com](http://www.compassnewspaper.com) Online Edition, 08/06/2011*

## 12. The Systemic Impediments and Democracy in Nigeria.

In every human systemic endeavour, there is bound to be problems here and there. Some of the usual problems are man made hindrances, and some are naturally imposed on man by nature. Democratic politics as means by which a society organises itself and through decisions affecting all the subjects within such environment are made and taken, is not in any way free from these hindrances. The impediment facing democratic politics in Nigeria is enormous.

As enumerated above, the impediments are self inflicted. They are not unavoidable, nor are they heavenly sent. The author was able to discover during the realisation of this work, that ordinary people on the street feel so distressed by the action of those in Politics. The politicians live with them and within their various communities. As the leaders and representatives of the people, the politicians, and all those that participate in the administration of the state, in one way or the other are supposed to lead by example. The ideas and opinions expressed here are direct response of the ordinary people outside the corridors of political power. People were asked to respond to the effect of human character on the democratic progress of the country. Majority of the contributors were of the opinion that the political actors are the ones to be held responsible for the magnitude of democratic failures in the country. In the city of Enugu, located in the Igbo ethnic homeland of the Eastern region, majority of respondents agreed that the number of registered political parties made it somewhat difficult for the electorate in the political arena to digest and articulate their programmes very well. (See Table 12.1 below)

A. It is good to have many political Parties in the country.		B. It is better to have 5 viable Political Parties, with clear ideological visions	
Agree Very Strongly With A	Agree With A	Agree With B	Agree Very Strongly With B
2	7	18	8
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 12.1 showing respondents responses in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011)

From table 12.1 above, it is established through the participants' responses that a total of 26 respondents from 35 participants agreed that it would be better to have 5 viable political parties with clear delineated ideological camps in the country, than to have multiple political parties registered but without any clear-cut ideological difference. While 9 respondents out of 35 participants agreed that it is better to have many political parties in the country. Many of the contributors expressed shock that they could not comprehend the rationale behind the decisions of their representatives in the political field to jump from one political party to another party; particularly on a mere pretence that they have been wrongly treated by the party leadership. There are also groups that were of the opinion that one of the reasons for the high number of people dumping one party to another is the fact that many of the parties have no sharp differences in their ideologies. Again, where any differences exist, then it can only be in terms of personalities in the party.

Many people who responded to the questionnaire questions in Abeokuta, and who confronted the same question about the state of politicians and democratic politics in the country; and particularly the ease at which politicians change party, expressed dissatisfaction with the development. Party Prostitution as defined by many in the western region of the country is a menace that has defied remedy. The politicians themselves refused to enact legislation against any individual who dumped his party to join another party. Many that responded were of the opinion that such an individual must not be allowed to go with the mandate given to him through another Party platform. But how logical or illogical it may appear to an uninformed person on the happenings in the Nigerian political scene, the truth is that people are not in any way satisfied with the behaviour of their elected representatives. The act of political prostitution as displayed by those who participate actively in the political process in Nigeria, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, does not leave much to be happy about (See table 12.2 below).

A. It is good to have many political Parties in the country.		B. It is better to have 5 viable Political Parties, with clear ideological visions	
Agree Very Strongly With A	Agree With A	Agree With B	Agree Very Strongly With B
2	4	9	5
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 12.2 showing participants responses in a questionnaire interview in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

In table 12.2 above, it is very clear that the people in Abeokuta are so displeased with the activities of the politicians and the political parties. In a questionnaire interview conducted within the ancient town of Abeokuta, a total number of 14 respondents from 20 participants agreed that having 5 political parties would help the democratic process in the country to grow. Only 6 participants responded that having many political parties in the system would be better for democracy in the country. There are also few who argued that the loose nature of political parties in the country created room for some fortune seeking individual to move around different political parties without any legal challenge.

In one of the federal states in the northern part of the country, the governor rode on the back of his former boss to become the Governor of the state, later dumped the party and the individual, who made it possible for him to emerge as the elected successor of the outgoing Chief executive of the state. A simple clash in opinion with some members of the party in an electoral Constituency is enough motivation for anybody to dump his party and migrate to another party. In fact, the differences in opinion most times do not have anything to do with the party policies.

In the town of Kano, the same trend was recorded. Answering the same set of questions, the participants in the case study area of Kano responded in the same pattern like the other two case study areas (See table 12.3 below)

A. It is good to have many political Parties in the country.		B. It is better to have 5 viable Political Parties, with clear ideological visions	
Agree Very Strongly With A 1	Agree With A 5	Agree With B 7	Agree Very Strongly With B 6
Agree With Neither			0
Don't know			0

Table 12.3 showing participants responses in a questionnaire interview in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

As shown in table 12.3 above, 13 respondents from 19 participants who responded to the questionnaire questions, agreed that having fewer political parties, at least 5 with clear ideological direction would be preferable to having many political parties in the system with no distinction among them. While only 6 respondents supported the idea of having many political parties in the country. The people in the later group believe that democracy would be well deepened with many political parties

competing in the system. However, majority of the people interviewed in the three case study areas overwhelmingly agreed that having fewer political parties in the system would create avenue for more compact party policy. People also argued that fewer political parties would also bring cohesion into the democratic and election management in the country. Most people that commented about the activities of politicians in the three case study areas chorused that those who decamped to other political parties are enemies of democratic politics. A significant number of respondents in the three towns of Kano, Abeokuta and Enugu and who participated in the interview conducted in respect of this study, suggested also that as measure to safeguard democracy in the country, any elected politician who dumped his party to another political party must be Constitutionally forced to abdicate the office he so occupy. However there are two categories of people involved in this enterprise.

The first group of people are those who had problems with the state branch of their parties. When such situation arises, the party becomes factionalised into opposing groups. Usually, if the differences between the protagonists and the antagonists as the case may be could not be resolved, then one of the factions may decide to decamp to any other party where the future of the new entrants is instantly guaranteed.

Another category of decamped party men are those party members who were denied the nomination ticket on the platform of their party. Some of them are forced to leave the party on the basis and manner at which they were prevented by the Governors in collaboration with the party executive in their states from presenting themselves to the members of the party for election. Governors are so powerful that, no member of the party dare challenge their control and authority over the party affairs. For the fact that the Governor assumed the overall leadership of the party in every state, it becomes also impossible for any candidate to call into question the powers of a Governor. However these two actions produced also two sets of personalities within the political family. Party members who were denied the chance to seek re-election to the offices they are occupying. Either the Governor, or the party executive in the states combined to deny the individual the opportunity of re-presenting himself to his electoral Constituency for assessment, or that the individual discovered that he or she has no chance anymore to contest under the platform of the party.

The second group of personalities are those who decided to abandon the party before the primaries to select the candidates under the parties for elections. After personality clash with some members of the party, an individual is usually marked out in the political equation of the party. Most of the members of the Federal Legislature fall into this category. Many of the National Assembly members engage in one or many squabbles with their states Governors. In the run up to the April 2011 General elections, many members of the states Assembly, and also members of the Federal Parliament had lost their return ticket to the Legislature as a result of them being affected by one of the mentioned factors.

Nevertheless there are also those politicians who lost out on the account of their irreconcilable differences with their political sponsors. The sponsors usually turned out to be political Investors. The people are always ready to finance the political enterprise of any willing individual, on the premise that there will be financial reward for them after the individual must have assumed office.

#### 12.1. **Political Investors and Democracy in Nigeria.**

Politics in Nigeria attracts not just individuals who are politically inclined, but it also attracts business minded individuals. So, it has become an issue of who you know, and what political connection the individual has with the powers that be in Nigerian Politics. It is one thing to belong to a registered political Party, to possess all the necessary Credentials an aspirant for a political Office in Nigeria should have, but it is another thing to have someone with the financial resources and political clout within his electoral Constituency, as well as within the hierarchy of his political Party. So, in essence, it is not the popularity of an individual candidate that wins elections, neither is it the acceptability of a political Party programme that translate into electoral victory for a candidate and his party during elections. Every election contest won always has an invisible hand to connect such an electoral triumph.

These invisible political hands are the people that I can describe as “political Investors”. They are Party members, super-rich; established businessmen with strong connections and influence within their constituencies, political party and the government. They control large supporters amongst the electorates. So, their political



influence is extensively felt. They do not contest for any elective office, but they sponsor candidates and political parties for various elective offices being contested. Individual candidates depend on these Investors for financial as well as political support during elections and after an election into a given political office must have been won by the Party and candidate. Simply, for any individual candidate to want to win an election into any political office, such an individual politician must as matter of fact ride on the back of a powerful political Investor.

The activity or presence of these Investors is not restricted to a particular side of the Niger River. They abound in every registered political Party in Nigeria. The political Investors invest heavy sums of money by sponsoring candidates and parties in every political dispensation, but with the sole aim of recouping their investment, when their sponsored candidate and political Party win an elective office. Their individual financial interest is what they view as utmost in the society. What the Investors stand to gain from the corridors of power, is what actually defines their financial commitment to a candidate and to a larger extent to a given political Party.

So, it thus means that prior to the election of a candidate into an elective office during an election, such a candidate will have to enter into a secret binding agreement with a political Investor, who will in turn bankroll his expenses during the election. The investment is usually in the form of public endorsement of the candidate, financial sponsorship of the candidate's campaigns and other miscellaneous commitments. The investor is sometimes viewed as a guarantor to the contesting Individual.

But the individual candidate is expected after assuming office to fulfil his own aspect of the agreement. That means, he will need to make available the public money that is supposed to go into the state Treasury to the Investor. And sometimes needs to grant the investor an average of 10 percent of every contract awarded by the state government to any individual company. So, democracy in Nigeria has become an enterprise, where an individual comes in and invests, then expects to Plough-back benefits from his investment. Simply put, money meant for the common development of the communities is diverted and shared by these unapologetic criminal minded politicians.

There are several drawbacks militating against democratic politics in Nigeria. These impediments to democracy are well in the open for everyone to see. It is well evident that most political parties in Nigeria are without ideology. The philosophies that guide the political parties are in large extent not known to an ordinary Nigerian electorate. In the process, the system ends up in producing politicians who also lack philosophy and clear political ideology as on how to move the country forward democratically. The political platforms in which individuals proffer political solutions to the many problems facing the country are themselves faulty. So, it implies that, one ends up having a faulty and zero ideology political system, producing zero ideology politicians. Since the parties themselves are without a concrete developmental ideology, then the individuals who form membership of the parties cannot also be said to be better.

The nature of Party politics in Nigeria made it possible for individuals to emerge as political Prostitutes or figuratively as political Navigators, though without Compass. These individuals have no political philosophy or principle. The only visible political principle they have is to be on the move always, navigating from one political Dockyard to another political Dockyard. But unlike Merchant Ships that have detailed navigation process, and can only dock at an unscheduled Dockyard under emergencies, most of the politicians in Nigeria do not have any detailed political philosophy. Losing a political contest for an elective political position is enough for an individual to navigate from his Party to another Party. Though not on the basis of better political ideology, but on the mere fact that he lost the contest to another individual from his political constituency.

In the last ten years alone, about 65% of politicians in Nigeria have navigated from their political parties to another. As mentioned earlier, politicians in Nigeria do not join a political Party because of the Party ideals. A good number of them moved from one Party to another on the single premise of them being elected into a political office under the platform of the Party. In the federal states of Bauchi, Zamfara, and Kebbi; the Governors were all elected on the Platform of another Party, the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), but after a few years of governance, they switched to the ruling Party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Also in Imo and Abia State another federal state in the Eastern region. The state Governors were elected on the platform of another Party, but after two years, the Governors abandoned the Party that gave them their mandate to join the ruling Party. And the Party was where both had initially decamped from to join the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA). So, to an average Nigerian politician, to change a political Party is like changing of clothes. Losing a Party nomination during the party primaries is enough ground for politicians to abandon their parties and join another political party that will be willing to give such individual her platform for the election. But sometimes, the leadership contributed in forcing some of the party members away from the party.

In the process most of the politicians carry moral Baggage with them. This is mostly so because of the fact that after moving to another Party, they usurp the political chances of the foundation members of their new political home. Then after getting the Party ticket for an elective post, and ultimately winning the contest under the Party platform, they will dump the Party which mandate it is carrying and rejoin his former Party, but without dropping the mandate given to the Party he is about to abandon.

By rejoining their former Party, they become automatic “Party Leaders”. Ironically, the beneficiary of these developments is always the ruling Party, either at the federal level or at the federal state level. There is never any attempt whatsoever to checkmate this system of political cheat. Then those who would have done something against it are equally themselves the beneficiary of the process. As previously mentioned, in the federal states of Abia and Imo in the eastern region of the country, the two Governors elected on the platform of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) in April 2007 National election decamped to another party, the PDP, which ironically was the ruling party, and that was the very of which party the Governors were formally members.

Worst of it all is the lack of adherence to the party policy by the members. The parties do not respect their rules. There are indeed sanctions in the party constitutions, but the sections that deal with new entrants from other parties are often neglected. In Nigeria such neglect is described as “Waiver”. Individuals given this preference

treatment are allowed to contest for political position alongside old members of the party.

In all the federal states where the sitting Governors decamped from a party that gave them their mandate to join another party, the process followed the same trend or direction. But not only that they rejoined their old party with the mandate of another political party, but they were granted a waiver to become the only contesting candidates for the office of the state governor of their various states, they were equally granted concession, that the party leadership in the state would be dissolved, and that they are to produce candidates for the office of the Party Chairman and also for the office of Secretary of the Party in their states. This was done by the receiving party through the repudiation of its standing rule on the admittance of new members or re-admittance of old members. According to the ruling party internal arrangement, and with regard to such situations, it is the party policy that anybody that is within the above two stated categories will spend 2 years before being eligible to contest for elective office under the platform of the party.

## **12.2. Dilemma of Party Conventions: Norms of Candidate Selection.**

As a prerequisite in a democratic enterprise, each registered political Party is by a Constitutional requirement to present an individual, who is to contest under the Party platform for a vacant elective political post in a given electoral environment. This could be a Councillorship post in an electoral Ward, Chairmanship post in a Local Government Council, a state House of Assembly position, a federal Constituency election for a seat in the federal House of Representative, a Senatorial election for the post of a Senator in the federal Upper Legislative Chamber, for the office of the Executive Governor of a federal state, or for the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Then, in an attempt to select a candidate that would carry the banner of the Party in any given scheduled election, Party officials as well as candidates use to engage in series of what I can describe as anti-democratic activities. These include among other things, blackmail, character assassination, use of Thugs against perceived opponents, Kidnapping of opponents relatives, use of money to persuade Party

delegates, use of the Law Courts through obtained court injunctions. These scenarios cut across all the political positions that candidates are expected to contest for. It often leads to strong political infighting within a Party. This development often leads to Party members decamping to other parties, where some of them are usually guaranteed and granted the opportunity to fly the Party Flag during the election. An individual could leave his party today by morning hour, and before the evening, such an individual will not only qualify but become a candidate in the impending election.

The political squabbles that started from the parties signal the commencement of electoral frauds in the political environment. This situation emerged also as a result of lack of internal democracy within the political parties. The events at the Party primaries are carried to the national elections by the candidates as well as the political parties. Simply put, the rigging or perpetration of electoral frauds begins from the organised delegate selection process for the Party primaries.

It is so also because of the involvement of political Investors in the process. These Investors always claim credit and shares in the success of any given candidate. They are usually involved in the area of candidate Campaign finance, given credence to the candidacy of the Party Flag-bearer, and drawing voters' attention to the candidate. In every case, the rules of the Party concerning the nomination of a Party candidate are usually flouted and disregarded by those meant to protect them from abuse by anybody.

But looking at the activities of these political Investors, one would discover that the people are also active members of the parties. In fact, they are mostly in the top hierarchy of the parties. So, in most cases it is not the ordinary Party members that decide who is to contest under the Party platform during an election. This further explains why these individuals are ever ready to act outside the Party rules in a bid to have their preferred candidate emerge as the Party Flag-bearer.

Then the process becomes that of the highest bidder, as each tries to influence the Party delegates with gifts and promises or to buy the delegates votes financially. In the process, Party laid down rules on how primary election should be conducted in selecting the Party candidate in any given election are neglected and abandoned. This leads to a situation of "Flout the Party rules first, achieve your goal, then call for

Party Unity”, though without any effect to the achieved goal of candidate manipulation. After the exercise, the Party hierarchy will as expected call for understanding and reconciliation among Party members. They often claim that it is for the good and unity of the Party. In essence, the activities of the Party hierarchies obstruct the functions and traditional values of internal democratic contest. This is so because of the fact that ordinary Party members are never allowed to vote and elect the candidate of their choice, rather it is the Party officials who select and imposed an individual on the whole Party within an electoral district.

In another fashion, Individual candidates with the help of their sponsors usually plant surrogates around electoral Wards within the Constituencies with the aim of inducing the local and often illiterate, poor and hungry voters financially. Their other activities involve also holding nocturnal meetings with various local chapters of the party seeking their support for votes or outright pay off for their vote identity cards. A purchased voting identity card is normally used through impersonation by an unidentified person, and certainly for the purpose of election fraud. The surrogates functions as conduit-pipe between the contesting candidate and the party delegates who are also members of the parties, particularly in terms of delivering promise money to the delegates coming for the convention.

At the Convention Ground, further Horse trading is expected, as the candidates and their agents struggle to keep intact their bought over delegate supporters. On the side of the participating delegates, it provides them with an avenue to make money from the power hungry candidates. Simply put, it is the candidate with better cash to dish out to participating Party delegates that almost always emerges at the end. By using financial inducement to secure votes for an unpopular candidate instead of using the candidate antecedents negates the very norms that democratic politics promotes. This has also greatly affected or impeded democratic growth in Nigeria

#### **12.2.1. Dilemma of Nigerian Factor and Party’s Primary outcomes.**

Nigeria’s factor implies doing things differently. Put differently, it tries to explain a situation where things are not done according to rules. One of the cases in reference is that of Enugu state in the Eastern region of Nigeria. The Peoples Democratic Party

(PDP) being the ruling Party at the National level, controlled the State Governors office as well as the State Legislature. But what becomes of democracy, when Party officials through in-fighting hijack the democratic process, create political impasse by dividing the party into factions.

This usually creates situations that lead to exclusion of certain members instead of inclusiveness, whereby every member of the party is accommodated to guarantee smooth democratic process. However, an individual candidate meant to fly the party flag is supposed to be directly nominated by the Party elected delegates in each electoral Ward and Constituency. Instead, the Party officials often hijack the process and allocate this function to themselves and not the ordinary Party members within that electoral environment. So, the people are denied the chance to exercise their democratic duty of being participant in the democratic process of decision making in the candidate selection.

In this case, the activity of the leadership of the party in the state created division within members, and that resulted in the emergence of two factions within the Party structure in the state. It became very clear that certain people would become victims of the impasse created, and others would turn out as victors as a result of the power struggle between the two factions. In the run-up to the April 2011 general elections, the two factions of the ruling party in the state organised different party primaries to nominate their candidates.

As expected, the Governor's camp list was admitted by the party National Working Committee as the party's list of candidates for the impending election. This was done without carrying all the other candidates and Party members along. Thereafter, the rejected group members approached the court, requesting the court to declare them the authentic faction of the party in the state, and demanded that the court rule against the acceptance of the party list that contained the name of the state governor and other nominated members from his faction. The case dragged on and the election was conducted, and the case goes on even many months after the elected candidates took their oath of office.

The processes used in nominating party candidates for elections rarely comply with the internal rule and regulations of the parties. Most parties hardly respect individual qualification or acceptability by party members. Candidates are not judged through their level of acceptability by the Party delegates. As was previously said in this chapter, “Nigerian factor” demands that one should “flout the rule, win the contest and seek reconciliation afterwards”. Nigerian factor is responsible for the many court cases that drag on for months and years after each election cycle in the country.

### **12.3. Performance Influenced Public Reaction.**

Individuals are elected into various political offices with the aim of creating representative Opportunities for the people within certain political constituencies. But the manner in which the elected officials pursue the issues that affect the everyday life of the people determines also the level of satisfaction derivable from the represented population. As a structural impediment, the activities of the elected officials shape the political thinking of the populace, as well as the evaluation of the officials themselves. Many elected politicians believe that the only connection they have or share with the local populace is the every four years democratic rituals represented by election campaigns and voting.

But then, the winning of re-election by any politician does not translate into public acceptance of such person. The society is so impoverished by the few mighty to the point that the ordinary people regard the little handouts often given to them as appreciation gift. Unfortunately these kinds of handouts come only once in every four years. And only when the politicians seek to renew their mandate, that they remember the bond between them and the locals in their constituencies. Due to prevalent poverty in the society, people do not count it necessary to hold the politicians accountable for whatever action or inaction they may have taken or may have failed to take.

The lack of any spontaneous reaction on the part of the electorates against the inaction of the politicians accounts also for the level of impunity acts by the elected officials. The structural obstructions planted by man in the democratic system not only within and between the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study, but



around every segment of the country through poverty in all its ramifications denied the society the leverage, which could have been used to checkmate the political actors. Apart from poverty of the pocket, there is also poverty of the mind. And since most of the people who were to confront and challenge the elected officials have all compromised their integrity, it becomes an open field for everyone.

In the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study, there is not any difference in the manner the people react to style of governance employed by the elected officials. As always, during the April 2011 general election, the politicians seeking elective positions trooped down to their various constituencies. So many material things were used to induce the illiterate and poor voters, so as to change their voting mindset. This ranges from some cup measures of Rice Grains, few amounts of Nigerian Naira, and clothing materials. In any case, the moment an individual voter received any gift from a political aspirant or from a registered political party, then such individual has compromised his conscience.

When an electorate received any material gift from a political aspirant, then he must have compromised his integrity, and such person has also failed to raise his voice or impose his control on the politician. He would no longer exercise any political leverage against the politician, particularly against any of the actions the politician might want to initiate or may have failed to initiate. Most times the electorate could not resist the advances of the politicians based on the fact that the general assumption has been with or without the vote of anybody the candidate of a particular “Investor or party” must win the election.

So many of the illiterate electorates chose to receive whatever anybody could offer them because the election must have been won or lost. Many Respondents in the town of Enugu expressed loss of confidence in the electoral process. Significant number of contributors lamented that the electoral body was not doing enough to sanction those indicted for electoral frauds, and to correct the anomalies discovered during previous elections in the country (See table 12.4 below).

What is your assessment of the Independent Electoral Commission, particularly on the management and conduct of elections in the country? No of Respondent : 35							
		Strongly Disapprove	Disapprove	Neither Approve Nor Disapprove	Approve	Strongly Approve	Don't know
A	Screening of Candidates during elections	3	5	17	6	0	4
B	Distribution of Election Materials	10	16	3	3	0	3
C	Conduct of elections, and Collation of votes	18	13	2	2	0	0

Table 12.4 showing participants responses in Enugu (Source Okoro 2011)

The information contained in the above table 12.4 explains more in detail how disillusioned participants who responded to the questionnaire question in the town of Enugu are. Lots of respondent sound so frustrated with the level of managerial competence shown by the Election Commission in handling elections in Enugu. 17 respondents out of 35 participants submitted that they neither approve nor disapprove how the Election Commission screen and clear contesting candidates during elections in Enugu town. But total of 8 respondents from 35 participants disapproved the manner the Election Commission handles elections in the town, while only 6 respondents from total of 35 participants approved how the Election Commission managed elections within the town of Enugu. But from the same respondents also is the data that showed a different result in another aspect of election management in Enugu by the Election Commission. It showed that 10 and 16 respondents respectively disapproved how elections materials are disbursed to the election polling centres in the delineated Constituencies of Enugu. Only 3 respondents from 35 participants approved how elections materials are provided to the polling centres in Enugu. About the conduct of election proper, 18 respondents out of 35 participants strongly disapproved how elections are conducted and how election results are collated by the Election Commission. Another 13 respondents from the 35 participants disapproved also how the conduct of the elections and the collation of election results are managed by the Election Commission. None of the respondents is satisfied enough to accept that elections are properly organised and conducted in Enugu by the Election Commission.

Likewise in Abeokuta another case study area located in Yorubaland western part of the country. According to field report obtained in the course of this study, there are accusations that certain politicians in the town use financial inducement to lure the illiterate electorates to cast their ballots differently, other than what they probably would have chosen. On the election days, the agents of the party as well as the candidate of the party usually position themselves a distance not far away from the Polling booth; and the Staffs of the Election Commission often feign ignorance of the presence of “Investor foot-soldiers” around the vicinity of a polling centre(See table 12.5 below). They are usually heavily mobilised financially, and while the election is in progress, the Agents will be busy sharing money to the intending electorates coming to cast their ballots. There is little or nothing one can expect from such political environment.

What is your assessment of the Independent Electoral Commission, particularly on the management and conduct of elections in the country? No of Respondent: 20							
		Strongly Disapprove	Disapprove	Neither Approve Nor Disapprove	Approve	Strongly Approve	Don't know
A	Screening of Candidates during elections	2	4	2	10	2	0
B	Distribution of Election Materials	4	7	4	4	1	0
C	Conduct of elections, and Collation of votes	7	8	1	4	0	0

Table 12.5 showing the response of participants in Abeokuta (Source Okoro 2011)

According to respondents' answers in Abeokuta, it is the people in the town are not so comfortable with the manner elections are organised and conducted in the area. The data in table 12.5 above showed that 4 and 7 respondents strongly disapproved and approved respectively, how election materials are distributed to the polling centres and around the delineated constituencies. On another issue based on conduct of elections and the collation of results, from a total number of 20 participants 7 and 8 respondents strongly disapproved and disapproved respectively how the Election Commission conduct elections and also how the body collate election results from the various ballot centres within and around the delineated electoral constituencies in Abeokuta. Only 4 respondents from 20 participants

approved how the Election Commission conduct and collate election results in Abeokuta in the recent past. While a total of 12 respondents out of 20 participants approved how the Election Commission conduct the screening of candidates contesting elections in the delineated electoral constituencies in Abeokuta town.

Indeed, there is also the issue of wholesale of political power by those who have amassed wealth through the same democratic politics. A voter and one of the respondents who participated in the April 2011 presidential election in Abeokuta town narrated how agents of a political party tried to induce him with money, so that he could cast his vote for their candidate. Some of the respondents interviewed disclosed also how they rejected the monetary inducement offered them by the parties, and some respondents also admitted that they collected money offered them but still cast their ballots according to their political choice without compromising their conscience.

In the City of Kano came the same story line as in the other two ethnic towns of Enugu in Igboland and also in Abeokuta located within Yorubaland (See table 12.6 below). Elections in the town of Kano are held under the same condition and circumstances like in the other two towns of Enugu and Abeokuta.

What is your assessment of the Independent Electoral Commission, particularly on the management and conduct of elections in the country? No of Respondent: 19							
		Strongly Disapprove	Disapprove	Neither Approve Nor Disapprove	Approve	Strongly Approve	Don't know
A	Screening of Candidates during elections	2	3	3	10	1	0
B	Distribution of Election Materials	3	5	2	4	5	0
C	Conduct of elections, and Collation of votes	7	7	3	2	0	0

Table 12.6 showing respondents' response in Kano (Source Okoro 2011)

The data in table 12.6 contain similar information to those in table 12.4 und table 12.5 discussed previously. In the area of candidate screening, 10 respondents from a pool of 19 participants approved how the Election Commission screened intending

contestants during elections in Kano, while 3 respondents out of 19 participants neither approved nor disapproved how the candidates are screened in the town. However, like in the other two case study areas, a total of 14 respondents out of 19 participants disapproved how the Election Commission conducted previous elections and how the body also collated previous election results in kano. On how the Commission distributes election materials to the various ballot centres across the delineated electoral constituencies in Kano, the number of respondents who approved and the number of those who disapproved how the Election Commission managed the exercise almost equal each other.

The sharing of money is a common event during elections in this part of the country. Voters are highly induced with money during elections. And because of the level of unemployment, illiteracy level, and poverty of all kinds, it is usually difficult to point out any measure of positive development from one democratic period to another. It has become a trend, that, at every election, people always anticipate the offering of money for votes, or the outright sale of their Voters card.

The reaction expected from the electorate is conspicuously missing. The actors that one expected to lead in the response to the governance style of the elected officials are unfortunately missing in the battlefield. Actors themselves are the foot soldiers of the elected officials, so there is the absence of leadership and coordination. The anticipation was always that the people would vote out any non performing official, or political party, but because the larger part of the electorates themselves are corrupt and have compromised their integrity, so it become difficult to confront and defeat any non performing official during elections. However, the electoral successes of performing politicians are without doubt well discussed by people.

But what this Author discovered in the field is more than meet the eye. People openly request financial settlement with a promise of voting for the party or a candidate. Then at the end of the day a non performing politician will have his supposedly battered political image reclaimed because he was able to dish out money to the hungry, poor and illiterate electorates. For that alone, the response to non performance goes with the money offered. By and large, the response to the

performance of the elected officials as election approaches is ethnic dependent, and varies in degrees.

In the western region of the Yoruba, what shaped responses about the performance of the officials is the political party, and not individual contestants. Whereas in the Eastern homeland of the Igbo, what determines the political future of any elected official is largely personal antecedent dependent. Candidates win or lose their political offices based on their personal antecedent, and not as a result of the party they belong to. By the Hausa-Fulani politically dominated Northern region it is essentially an issue of party and personal antecedent. Majority of the electorates within the Hausa-Fulani believe in party, as well as in selected personalities.

A response to a non performing elected official is supposed to be a total rejection in the Polls should such an individual return to seek for another mandate from the people. There is no spontaneous rejection of the so many non performing elected politicians across the three ethnic nations in Nigeria. The use of financial inducement to win elections is very unfortunate. This is the order in the political scene of the three case study areas of Enugu, Abeokuta and Kano, and this practice obstructs the free flow of democratic politics in the areas. There is combination of factors that disrupts a free flow democratic politics in the three ethnic nationalities, and which ultimately affect every other segment of the country. Poverty of all kinds, illiteracy, and greed are also part of the major issues dislocating democratic project in Nigeria. The factors are not subject to a particular ethnic nationality, but they exist in the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani under review in this study.

### **13. Research Recommendations**

The Research recommendations the author put forward here are primarily based on the issues derived from the field study. The issues that provided information for the derivation of these recommendations are multi-faceted. This is so because of the fact that the remedy to the political dislocation in Nigeria needs and requires serious ideological repairs. Not only does the situation require realistic public reorientation about the Nigerian political project, but it also demands a practical approach to issues concerning the ethnic configuration in the country.

#### **13.1. Restructuring of the components units of the country, by redrawing the administrative Map and reordering of the internal boundaries.**

The inherited political structure and also the military created artificial internal boundaries did not represent the political realities on the ground. The structural properties left behind by the departing British colonial government was never revisited by those who assumed leadership of the country at the time and thereafter. In what the colonial authority left as colonial injustice is still been retained by those whose responsibility it is to create a sustainable polity. The political structure left behind by the departing colonial government was made or configured in a way and manner that offers the British interest protection. The inability of the subsequent leaders of the country to take stock of the political situation of the country left many questions unattended to. According to Przeworski, to be able to study systematically the origins and the consequences of political regimes in a given society, one must first determine what regime each country has had during each period of its history (Przeworski et al 2000: pg13).

The present structure of the country retains the same structural pattern as in the colonial period. The colonial government drew the internal boundary arbitrary without recourse to the composition of the people and the various villages at the borders of the three ethnic regions. As a result many tribal people were wrongly moved into areas they have no reason to be. Some Igbo people were moved into Benue that is

in northern region, and others moved to Midwestern region, the movement of people of Yoruba descent in present day Kwara State and some parts of Kogi State into Northern region; thereby making and turning a majority tribe into a minority. The military government that created the federal states now followed the same pattern used by the colonial administration. People were moved into states they should not have been into. Some states were created by the military governments without recourse to the ethnic or tribal composition of those they were meant to serve.

In order to correct the anomaly in the structure of the country, the various ethnic groups needs to be rejoined and have them properly reintegrated into their supposedly homeland. This would reduce internal marginalisation calls. The people from a majority ethnic group moved into areas where they become minority presents a situation of political discord. As a step towards creating a sustainable and stable political environment, the federal states need to be restructured in a way that respects the various ethnic groups' rights of identity.

#### **13.1.1. Writing a new Constitution with emphasis on national citizenship above Indigenisation policy.**

Every existing state has the privilege to decide through constitutional provision how the society is to be governed or administered. The content of a convention willingly entered into by majority of the citizens need be the source of authority of leadership in the society. But, where the perceived source of political authority did not emanate from those whose activities it is meant to regulate leaves room for political manipulation. The constitution of the country needs to reflect the general and popular will of the people. It should not be a reflection of opinion of the very few in the society. Nigerians, irrespective of ethnicity or political lining need to participate in the approval or rejection of any convention produced document. When the constitution of the country contains the opinions and wishes of the citizens, then, whatever pronouncement coming as a result of the application of such laws would be highly legitimate.

The present constitution placed more emphasis on Indigene rights more than citizens' rights. Individuals are recruited in the ministries only on state of origin basis.



An individual cannot be employed in the service of another state unless in the very state of his or her origin. Certain rights are denied an individual just on the basis that he or she is not from the state. National Citizenship needs to override the policy of indigenisation. When the constitution is shaped in a way that it guarantees a citizen the right to exercise those privileges subscribed in the constitution, no matter where he or she find himself in the country, would create strong patriotism in the society. When national citizenship overrides indigenship, then, the incessant ethnic strife and bloodshed would be reduced and controlled. The present constitution created room for citizens and indigenes. As one of the measures needed for the creation of new Nigeria; the constitution in use at the moment need to be phased out and replaced with more people oriented one.

### **13.1.2. Reordering of the political and electoral processes and reassessment of national needs.**

The political terrain of any country is designed and defined by several factors. The issues might be human influenced and they might also be nature imposed. In every democratic political environment, there abound political disagreement based on policy differences, ideological direction, and personality clash. But how the individuals who are involved in the struggle organise themselves and against themselves determine the durability as well as the sustainability of the institutions so established from the process.

From three Party political structures in 1999, to the 63 registered political parties in 2011, the political field did not shrink and did not expand beyond or below what it was in 1999. The situation only succeeded in showcasing the political madness in the country. As noted before in the course of this study, the parties are formed without any clear defined political ideology. The parties without exception are just collections of individuals, who for personality reasons agreed to operate under a single political banner.

That the existing political parties do not have a defined political ideological direction cannot be overemphasised. A political situation, where the parties do not have any defined ideological footprint, through which the polity could be modified. But the

question is who is to modify the society? It is troubling because the politicians who one looks up to with the belief and anticipation of enacting laws and initiating policies that could lift the society needs to be modified as well. In essence, the country is sick, and the people meant to cure her from the illness are at the same time sick.

According to Ndolo,

“The politicians are without exception derailed and cannot be entrusted with the faith of the society”<sup>1</sup>.

In many hitherto existing democratic societies, the method of politicking and the political structure operational in such societies are designed to reflect the type of people in it. The presidential democracy as introduced and practiced by the country did not take cognisance of the fact that the country is peopled differently in comparison to other societies where federal structure operates. A serious thinking and assessment need to be made in line with the type of political arrangement that is more suitable for the country. The present presidential democracy, where the policy is winner takes all and with the president acting as demi-god does not figure well with the reality on the ground. Politics in the country need to be reduced to that of vocation and not transactional as it is today. People do not venture into politics because they wanted to serve their various communities, but on the account of how much money they can make.

There is the need to use proportional representation to distribute parliamentary seats both at the state level and also at the national level. Parliamentary seats need to be allotted the participating political parties according to the percentage of votes each party won in elections.

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1. *Ike S Ndolo is a Professor of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He maintained that the political leaders are so corrupt, and that has affected the national psyche. People used those in authority as yardstick in dealing with issues that required high level of morality*

When this is done and applied in the electoral process, then, the frequent friction between political parties and candidates would be reduced to the barest minimum, if not eradicated from the body politics of the country. The number of existing political parties requires restructuring. The parties need to be reduced to just 5 strong parties. Politicians and members of the existing political parties need to merge and form at most five parties. The innovation would lead to the formation of five national and popular political parties with different and clear ideologies. The development would reduce also impunity in the political arena, where one single political party dominates everything in the country.

Nigeria should look towards Germany political system. Germany has a federal structure and the inclusion of 5 percent hurdle or threshold in the constitution or the electoral act of the country guaranteed equal space for participation. The system as it operates in Germany does not give one single party the advantage of forming the government without a coalition partner. The German system will eliminate the issue of ethnic fragmentation and make it a non issue during and after national elections. The distribution of offices would no longer be an issue of a single political party.

Alternatively, the political parties could be made to merge themselves into two party structures. This would be in line with the United States of America party structure. With the two party systems, the national politics would then come down to issues based politics. The system would take away the ethnic colouration of national politics. In the United States, the electorates are only concern about each party's programmes. In other words, an individual American belongs either to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, or belongs to the third order, the Independent Voters.

Though the existence of only two political parties will limit the choices of individuals, but in Nigeria's case that is the best possible option. Nigeria is so fragmented to allow for many political parties. Many political parties create room for continued religious attack, negative ethnic mindset, and the question of North and South political direction, as well as the East and West political rivalry.

The constant violent attacks against groups in the different parts of the country are often blamed on political failures of the government or against certain persons from a certain ethnic group. The overall failure and misfortune of a group is usually blamed on the activities and success of other groups within the system. It is critically viewed that the moment the system accommodates only two ideologically grounded political parties, then the frequent crises will be reduced to the barest minimum. When a group fails to actualise their set goals, it is certain that such group will blame someone for their misfortune.

A greater number of respondents believe that the ethnic mindset present in the political scene at the moment is occasioned by the presence of many political parties in the system. Many people tried to draw comparison with the political mood in the 1992-1993 democratic transition. At the time, only two political parties were registered, and membership drawn from every segment of the country, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, or religious belief.

During the election period the candidates of one of the political parties for the office of President and Vice President were both Muslims. The candidates presented by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were both Muslims, though from two different regions and from two different ethnic groups. Nobody was interested about the religious belief of the contestants, because the situation did not give room for such thinking.

The Two Party structure provides no room for those who often ride on the back of ethnic support for success. The system also when adopted will deny anybody who might want to use religion as a political tool to seek for alternative means of seeking support from the people. Like Obioma rightly pointed out, when he said that,

“the people of Igbo extraction voted for Moshood. K.O. Abiola, a Yoruba and Babagana Kingibe, a Kanuri Man from the North-East of the country, without considering the fact that both were Muslims and non Igbo, and neither hail from the Eastern region of the country. Nobody thought of the religious implication of their pairing, what the people consider most important was the Party platform that presented them, and also the hard earned personality status of the candidates”<sup>2</sup>

Really, the issue of religion did not matter to those that voted in the election. The electorates then wanted nothing but the better of the two alternatives presented to them. The personalities involved played also a vital role in reducing the fear of the people about Muslim-Muslim Ticket. If, the government and the people accept to adopt Two Party structure, it will to greater extent diminish the usual ethnic mistrust, and bickering among the three ethnic groups. This is based on the fact that it was once used in the country, though engineered from above by President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, and it functioned very well. But for this to be possible, most of the politicians must agree to forgo their individual ambitions of trying to be party Chairmen, Secretaries, or official of whatever political office. The hunger for power or authority is partly the reason for the many registered political parties in the country.

### **13.1.3. Equality of the geopolitical zones.**

Looking at the ethnic configuration of the country, and how each ethnic group relate to another, one would understand the problems associated with the low development progress in Nigeria. Every single political decision made in the country always has ethnic colouration.

The political structuring of the country into geopolitical zones was done without creating the necessary condition it requires to function without blemish. The creation was done lopsided and did not reflect or capture the very idea it was meant to serve. The six geopolitical zones created through the 1995 Constitutional Conference in Abuja did not address the problem associated with such innovation. There is a strong imbalance in the number of federal states each zone contained. More so, when federal financial allocations are shared on the basis of federal states, in that sense, some zones receives more federal attention than others. There is need to have parity in the number of federal states in each geopolitical zone. When the geopolitical zones are equal in the number of federal states, then, the recurrent issue of marginalisation would be removed from the national politics. The issue would no longer form part of election argument by those regions and tribe who feel marginalised by the present structure.

There is no political pronouncement made without one or more of the three ethnic nations of Igbo, Yoruba, or Hausa-Fulani lamenting against marginalisation of its nation. Discovery on the field also proved that there are no tremendous changes in the political psyche of the people after the demise of the First Republic politicians.

From the three ethnic groups, the people who hitherto took after these foundational leaders of the country have not been able to display any strong political maturity. The same political mindset that existed before and soon after independence still dictates the political direction of the three ethnic groups.

Another troubling aspect of the national politics is the issue of ethnic loyalty. Can there be changes in orientation and political priorities of the three ethnic nationalities? Everything done or initiated in the country is perceived on the strength of the ethnic groups. Who occupies what, or who holds what political position in the government has a very strong ethnic colouration.

The question of rivalry is not hinged on competence or capability and capacity to deliver, but rather on ethnic identity and bias. In the process, the best head may not be available to provide the needed services, which the entire country stands to benefit. The notion that an individual from another ethnic nationality cannot excel in a certain position of authority is simply based on the myopic ethnic calculation of certain political personalities.

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2. *Patrick Obioma is a local politician in Enugu North. In his candid assessment of the elections in Nigeria, he submitted that the country has been for a long time very unfortunate with leadership problem.*

#### **13.1.4. Staggered democratic Election Schedule.**

To contain the frequent electoral frauds that bedevilled the conduct of elections in the country, the procedure used in conducting the various elections needs to be revised. Before the April 2011 National Election, the tradition has been that of holding all the National elections the same day, and at the same time. The result and the experience generated from the previous elections proved the need for a revision of how elections are organised in the country.

The National elections need to be staggered stretching into three weekends. There are several benefits with the adoption of this staggered method. When the elections are divided, it will reduce the rate of criminal activities usually perpetrated by candidates and their hired thugs. However the splitting of the elections into different zones would enable the Election Commission to plan very well and to also deploy her resources effectively.

#### **13.2. Modified Open Ballot System.**

The ability of qualified political Individuals to cast their votes during elections, through a process billed for the election of any contesting candidate, stands as the hallmark of democratic politics. But how the process is organised and propagated determines how tenable the result derived from the exercise will be. However, the democratic processes as noticed in the Nigeria political environment do not promise any element of hope. The multi ethnic structure of Nigeria, do also not provide any organised and well structured civil society base.

The democratic political education differs from one region to another and differs also in size and quantity. In Nigeria, the ethnic groups differ in every aspect of human life. Each ethnic nationality has a different and negative view of others and above all a different view about what Nigeria means.

As an integral part of democratic governance, obedience to rules and strict adherence to the constitution of the country stand out as the foundation and roof of democracy. Nigeria embraced democracy without any democratic structure on the

ground. Nigeria accepted the democratic features, but did not accept the principles that make democratic politics feasible. However, the factors of ethnic identity and that of ethnic mindset that politics depended on in Nigeria to progress are themselves anti-democratic.

The political right of an individual to vote and elect a candidate of his choice is never respected. There is always the creeping in of the Nigerian factor. Elections hardly give the populace the candidate they voted for. The Nigerian factor always dictates the last phase. It is not the ballots cast at the Polling booths that are declared at the end of any voting process. A winner or Party with the highest possible votes is known even before ballots are being cast. Electoral victories in Nigeria do not mean that a political party or a contesting candidate is the peoples' choice.

Three factors determine electoral success in Nigeria. The political Investors, the Electoral Commission, and the Security Agencies are the three culpable institutions that determine the outcome of any organised democratic elections in Nigeria. Elections results announced do not always correspond with the ballots cast, and do not reflect the actions and wishes of the electorates. The democratic process in Nigeria is not tailored to produce respected democratic values; rather it is centred on ethnic sentiments and concerns. With the federal offices in sight, the ethnic nationalities always consider the party with the greatest benefit for them, and not necessarily a candidate who will work to develop the entire country.

The Nigerian democratic space is so compromised that even opposition candidates and parties are deeply dissolving into the ruling Party. This situation has created a Democracy with opposition parties, but without opposition candidates. There is a strong absence of Party discipline in all the registered political parties. The reason for this is not in any way far-fetched. Candidates are routinely dropped by those who control the party Machinery, and most often based on indefensible reasons.

If the modified Open Ballot System is sanctioned as the method of ballot casting in the country, then the constant issue of Vote rigging would be drastically reduced. The electorate should be made to stand in the front of the candidate of their choice and get counted by the election officials in open form. Only through this method would the



problem of multiple voting be controlled, only through this system can the problem of ballot box snatching come under control. When this method is adopted, then the problem of transporting ballot papers to the collation centres would be eliminated. As noticed during the April 2007 and the recent April 2011 general elections, the Ballot Collation Centres are where the election is manipulated.

The Modified Open Ballot System will provide a more transparent condition where the ballots cast will be counted in the presence of the electorate and the result authenticated and posted for everybody to see. The rate of electoral frauds, and brigandage on the part of the people involved is so alarming that even the system itself cannot be said to be fault free.

#### **13.2.1. Dedicated and adequately trained Manpower.**

Changing the rules of the game is one thing, but another thing concerns those meant to operate the rules. The disruption of the election process is not just the fault of the politicians and their cohorts, but also with the connivance of the election commission staffs. The high incidence of financial inducement by many of the contending contestants, and coupled with the low remuneration of the election officials, rendered them vulnerable for temptation. As a matter of national priority, the welfare of the officials of the election commission must not be left to the mercy of the politicians.

## Chapter 14

### 14. Appraisal of the Nationalities and their political tools.

Looking historically at the circumstances that brought about the merging together of the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study, it would be clear to understand the philosophical as well as the political direction of each of them in the enlarged Nigeria. But like in every divided society, Nigeria has for several years been enmeshed in ethnic political squabbles and interpretations. It goes also to reinforce the argument of Lijphart (1977: 1) when he said that it is difficult to achieve and maintain a stable democratic government in a plural society. According to Eckstein (1966:34), heterogeneous societies are societies divided by segmental cleavages. He maintained that the cleavages existed where political divisions follow very closely, and especially concern lines of objective social differentiation, especially those particularly salient in a society. But Lijphart explained that segmental cleavages can be defined in the realm of religion, ideological, linguistic, cultural, racial, or ethnic nature (Lijphart 1977:3-4).

In the case of Nigeria, all the above mentioned primordial cleavages are abundantly available. There is a strong attachment to communal feeling among the community of people who belong to the three ethnic groups. Every aspect of interaction within the three societies of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani is coloured by unalloyed consideration of communal solidarity. In his contribution to the debate about ethnic solidarity, Geertz (1963) classified the solidarity among people of the same ethnic identity to be based on “primordial” loyalty<sup>1</sup>. He asserted that the loyalty is located in the realm of language, religion, custom; region, race or assumed blood ties. In essence, the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani can be classified as primordial groups that evolved and thrived through primordial loyalties.

Like Lijphart described the situation in his response to Furnivall’s argument about divided society; as one of geographical mixture but with mutual social avoidance (Lijphart 1977:17). The situation presented by Furnivall (1948: 304) vividly described the structure of Nigerian state. The three societies of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani live far apart from each other, but live side by side with each other and at the same

time separately, all within the same political sovereignty; but each ethnic group retaining its religion, customs and traditions as well as language.

In many plural societies, especially those societies divided through language differences, the pride each group impressed on its own ethnic or distinct mode of communication remained sacrosanct and uncompromised. The sentimental attachment societies accord their inherited language plays different roles in different nations. These different roles can be traced down to political, economical, and in socio-cultural realm. Like Donald L Horowitz (2000:222) explained, that language has ethnic cohesion-building capacity, and it also accomplishes double-linkage point as it connect political claims to ownership with psychological demand for the affirmation of group worth<sup>2</sup>. However, Ted Gurr (2000:67) argued that there is no warrant to assume that any one basis for ethnic identity, such as race, language, religion, or a common homeland, is intrinsically more important than another. The various natives of the three nationalities under review in this study see and regard their native languages as the most potent factor in their identification as coming from a particular part of the universe. They use their local indigenous languages as measure of distinction between them. The language factor as used in Nigeria creates a horizontal dilemma in the polity. It creates a situation of exclusiveness and inclusiveness among the three ethnic nationalities.

Just like in Belgium where the impasse created by dissimilarity in language knocked down the chances of forming a government after election. The Belgian society is divided into two halves of north and south, poor part of Belgium and wealthy part of Belgium. The north speaks a Germanic language, Dutch, and has prospered through trade and hi-tech industries. In southern Belgium, the locals speak French, a Latin language, and suffer joblessness and slow growth. Many in the north have resented to continue subsidising the south. However, in every plural society, language and local custom and tradition determine membership, and it also determines who is to be excluded from a group identity. As shown in Map 3.8, in chapter 3, the three ethnic nationalities are far apart from each other, and in each ancestral homeland a native language is spoken, and in between the ethnic nationalities there is the existence of other native languages.

In essence, each of the three nationalities uses its language as a political tool in the national politics. It is to be remembered as well that the languages of the three ethnic nationalities are used in the national parliament, they are also embossed on the country's currency, and they are equally included in the national educational curriculum for primary and secondary school pupils. Unlike in state of Assam in India, where the Bengalis and the Assamese rocked each other in a bitter language supremacy battle (Horowitz 2000: 219), the three ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani ended up embracing each others language right and space to operate within the national discourse. During elections, the language of each ethnic group is used as campaign language in the areas where they are spoken. According to Donald L Horowitz (2000:219) language functions as a symbol of domination. Furthermore, language issues can be said to represent a symbol of group identity which has the capability to bring together claims to exclude others (Horowitz 2000:220).

The claim for ancestral homeland by the Yoruba and the Igbo, as well as the territorial conquest of the Hausaland by the Fulani created two distinct homeland classifications in Nigeria. Though the Yoruba claimed ancestral homeland was explicitly aided by war of conquest and internal expansion, the Yoruba still maintain a homogenous identity located within a large expanse but geographical area. As explained already in chapter 1 and chapter 3 of this study, the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and Igbo are located very far away from each other. The people are separated and the proximity of the homelands further diminished by the existing of other minorities between the three ethnic groups.

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1. Clifford Geertz, "The integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States;" in *Old societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Free Press, 1963, pp 109-13).

2. Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p 222)

#### **14.1. Pre-and post Independence relations between Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani: Identity Dilemma:**

The identity dilemma created since the colonial era succeeded in a significant way to pitch each ethnic group against the other. During the pre-independence political era, the three ethnic nationalities operated on different political ideas. The country was divided into three distinct regions, each dominated by one of the three ethnic nationalities, but joined or connected at the central government. But not only that the country was divided into different regions, the political parties in the country were also structured through regional political philosophies, and as such produced individual politicians who derived their personalities through regional and ethnic support. There was no Nigerian who enjoyed the support of the three ethnic groups all together. So, the system ended up producing and offering the country regional champions instead of national champions.

There was regional primacy of control over the federal authority in the country. This was demonstrated at the period through the power equation in the government formed after the country's Independence by the choice of Sir Ahmadu Bello, who was at the time the leader of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), to head the government of Northern region as the regional premier; though his deputy Sir Abukakar Tafawa Balewa was nominated to serve as head of the Federal government at the centre. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was then made the President, and Chief Obafemi Awolowo with his Action Group went into opposition in the national parliament. But at this period, all the three ethnic nationalities played different roles in what metamorphosed as Independent Nigeria.

The Eastern region played a pivotal political role in the stability of Nigeria, this the region did by being consistent in the pursuit of national unity and inter-ethnic cooperation. Under the leadership of the late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Political figures from the Eastern region of the country played the role of bridge builders in the young and fledgling Nigerian state. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, as the leader of the first truly significant national political party, National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) built a coalition of political players comprising individual politicians from the Eastern region, and also Yoruba politicians from the Western region.

The politicians from the eastern region led by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe formed a political alliance with many respected and nationalist Yoruba leaders like Dr. Ibiyimka Olorun-Nimbe, who was the first and only Mayor of Lagos, Sir Odeleye Fadahunsi, who on his part was the first national vice president of the NCNC and also as the second indigenous Governor of Western Region, Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu, who was until his death the strong man of Ibadan politics. There were also others that include Chief Adeniran Ogunsanya, Chief Mojeed Agbaje and Otumba T. O. S. Benson. At the time the political leadership of the Eastern region led by the Igbo majority forged a political alliance which cut across ethnic boundaries. As a fall-out of the alliance between the Igbo led Eastern Nigerian politicians and their Yoruba counterparts, the NCNC and its allies won a majority of seats in the 1951 Western House of Assembly election. Similarly, in the Eastern Region, the Igbo-dominated NCNC, true to its pan-Nigerian orientation and commitment, elected as the first mayor of Enugu metropolis, Mallam Umaru Altini, a Moslem from Katsina, North West Nigeria.

Furthermore, in 1957 when the British colonial Government, under intense pressure from southern politicians requesting for Independence of the country, attempted to dissolve the marriage between the North and the South consummated through Lord Lugard's Amalgamation of 1914, with the provision for Independence to the three Regions separately, though under the tacit condition that two from the three regions must accept the offer, that singular act of gesture created a near political crisis in the country. The Northern Region, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani and led by the Northern People's Congress (NPC) rejected the offer for independence on the premise that the North was not ready at that time for political as well as economic Independence. However, the Western Region, the Yoruba homeland and led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Action Group (AG) without hesitation declared its readiness to accept the independence offer at the time. But it was the Eastern region, dominated by the Igbo and led by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe NCNC that held the balance in the decision that could have resulted to the demise of Nigeria. It was an issue that could have made or break Nigeria if the three Regions had chosen to go their separate ways as Independent sovereign states.

The NCNC leader, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, took the stand that although the Eastern Region was ready to assume the responsibilities of Independence, its attainment without the North would have resulted in the disintegration of the country. The

Eastern Region did not want to create a situation whereby the country would be forced to go different ways. The refusal of the Eastern region to support the Yoruba in opting out of Nigeria leaving the Northern region aside was what kept Nigeria together until now as a single country. In essence, the Igbo-led Eastern Region accepted rather to forgo the advancement of its own political and economic interests, than risk the break-up of Nigeria.

But the fact remained that, had the Eastern Region opted for Independence at that time, the territory under its control would have comprised in today's terms the following nine states with their enormous human and natural resources: Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Bayelsa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, and Rivers. It would also have included in all probability (as was the case with then Northern Cameroon, which became today's Adamawa and Taraba States) what was then Southern Cameroon, with the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula well in the middle of a distinct, sovereign and Independent Eastern Nigeria. By 1960, the three Regions would have become separate sovereign states.

#### **14.1.1. Political philosophy of the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani.**

The approximate population of Nigeria is in the region of 167 Million people, but the three ethnic groups under review in this study comprise more than three-fourths of the overall population. As mentioned before, the three ethnic nationalities are geographically concentrated; and indeed the three ethnic groups represent the largest groups in each of the three regions in the country. The Hausa-Fulani formed the majority in the North, the Yoruba formed also the majority in the West, and Igbo formed the majority as well in the Eastern region. The political calculation of the major players in the 1960s Nigerian politics was very clear on where each individual politician and his political party intended to take its people to, and each one of them has a well designed and articulated programme to drive its political intentions to success. However, after the 1960s political struggles, and the subsequent passage of the driving forces behind the political parties, another set of political players emerged, and not only from one ethnic nationality or region, but like in the past, from the three ethnic nationalities.

In every society, and particularly in societies divided by many human factors, there is bound to be a political direction through which that society operates. In many ways, such ideology could centre on strategies on how to counter and confront other existing nationalities within the large divided enclave, and it could also be structured on how to create a harmonious, non confrontational environment that promotes avenue for mutual political discussions. Nevertheless, the political ideology propagated by any group can also be misconstrued by other hitherto existing bodies within the larger political environment as offensive and protective.

All the three ethnic nationalities have ethnic coloured political ideals, although all tend to play towards the centre of the country's politics.

The government formed in 1959, and which lasted till 1964 was made out of interest from Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and the National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC), while the Action Group was the official opposition party. However, NPC was at the time the largest and strongest political party in the Northern part of the country, and as a result dominated the political process in the area, the NCNC was equally the largest and dominant party in the Eastern part of the country, with the Igbo in the majority, while AG was a regional political party in the western region, and home to the Yoruba. Like Lijphart (1977:164) rightly emphasised, the federal structure of Nigeria created multiple ethnic balance of power, with no ethnic segment coming even close to majority status, into a federal imbalance with one state, the North. However, the North represents about 60 percent of the total land area

#### **14.2. Accommodating the Concept of Ethnic Mindset within a Democratic Paradigm.**

As a Concept, Mindset can be defined in a social science realm as an attitude, stereotype, image, thought pattern, or Worldview<sup>3</sup>. According to Webster, it is a fixed mental attitude formed by experience, education, prejudice. Therefore, it could be assumed to represent a situation of the mind when an individual or group constructs a given thought, belief or thinking regarding a state of an event, or a constructed philosophy about an issue, which invariably could be positive or negative. Ethnic Mindset as a Concept can be defined further as that positive or negative thinking of an ethnic or primordial group about others or non-members of that group. Negative



mindset thrives in a society or a situation where two individuals or groups are in contention for a purpose.

In a democracy, people with diverse backgrounds in most cases organise under a single political ideal that may revolve around group survival. Accordingly, democratic politics is meant to accommodate every qualified citizen within a nationally defined political environment; this is irrespective of one ethnicity or orientation. In democracy itself, ideals are presented and represented by different people under various platforms. The need for identity solidarity motivates existing ethnic groups to organise themselves and resources in places where free democratic elections are staged. Unlike in a homogeneous community, multiethnic or divided societies usually engage each other competing for interests by cleavages linked to ethnic mindset.

Nevertheless, the understanding of ethnic differences and its application in the democratic politics of a state differ from one society to another, and is particularly different when compared to a west European, or North American society and a divided society in sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, ethnic bias or preference is very much evident during democratic dispensation, particularly in sub-Saharan African societies; political parties are mostly dominated by individuals from certain ethnic nationalities, voting behaviour bears ethnic outlook, and many national issues are given ethnic interpretation. In the west European divided societies a “triple-issue spectrum” of language, class and religion dominates the democratic scene, unlike in the sub-Saharan Africa society, where ethnic identity overshadows every other issue.

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3. Glen Fisher (1998: 10), *The Mindset Factor in Ethnic Conflict: A Cross-Cultural Agenda*, Intercultural Press, Inc.

### **14.3 Coding Ethnic Mindset as tools for political Bargaining in Nigeria.**

Considering the configuration of positions in the government since Independence of the country, the three ethnic nationalities have been trying to overcome each other in the matter of political positions occupied and the influence in administration formed. The political terrain in Nigeria is designed by the issues that divide the three ethnic nationalities doing political battle with each other since the end of British colonial power. The race for Independence created a three-way political contest, and instead of the usual struggle with the colonial government, it became a straight political fight influenced by ethnic consideration. Each of the three communities struggles to overcome the influence and threat of others in the governance of the country.

But the ethnic composition of the state made it impossible for any single ethnic group to dominate others by winning elections all over the three ethnic regions. It was impossible then because of the formation, structure and influence of political parties present in the regions at the time. The point of discourse among the three nationalities was motivated through ethnic solidarity, common language that connects each ethnic group, and the struggle for identity preservation. In part, the dependence of the political players on their ethnic homelands to secure election victory resulted in the balkanisation of the country's political landscape. In the other part, the ideological convictions of those men equally played decisive roles in taking those political steps that led to the formulation and propagation of the many political decisions, which they bequeathed to the present political class.

The political alliances and alignment in the country's political field has been subject of focus in many democratic studies most of which were conducted in the period beginning from the middle of the 1960s up until the late 1970s and to the present time by both African and European scholars. Some of those studies dwelt on the historical heritage and ethnic configuration as well as the functionality of an ethnic influenced coalition government in the 1960s particularly the events and various political intrigues that led to the fall of the government, while others examined some of the aspects they claimed to be responsible for the unstable nature of democratic politics in the country. Alex Gboyega (1997), Julius O, Ihonvbere(1998), Rotimi T, Suberu(1994), Arend Lijphart(1977) studies simply concentrated on the country's

post-independence relations between the nationalists and the colonial policies and the mode of governance, and the political evolution that emerged after independence for the purposes of assessing their “presumed democratic correctness and reliability”.

According to Gboyega (1997), the three ethnic groups engaged each other in a fierce political duel in a bid to have greater influence and exert more political power in the national government. The urge for political influence in the centre of governance made the two major political blocks in the Northern and Eastern regions to form a coalition government, and thereby leaving the Yoruba of the Western region to go into opposition in 1964 in the federal Parliament. This scenario was repeated in the 1979 return to democratic politics. The pattern of 1964 Coalition government formed by the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), which was a formerly National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon, and the 1979 coalition government formed by National Party of Nigeria (NPN), which was projected as a National party and the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), which was also projected as a National party but dominated by the Igbo, and was led by late Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe followed the same trend. A political party viewed as an Igbo party, and another political party regarded as a Hausa-Fulani North dominated political party coming together to form a government and leaving the Yoruba ethnic nation and region out of the formed government. In the 1960s democratic dispensation the Northern region led by the NPC headed the coalition government formed as Tafawa Balewa became the Prime Minister, the Eastern region controlled the office of the President, as well as the President of the Senate under a Parliamentary democracy.

Then in 1979 again under Presidential democracy, the North controlled the office of the President and the Eastern region was allotted the offices of Vice President, Speaker federal House of Representatives, and the Senate President Dr Joseph Wayas came also from an eastern minority group, though the Vice President and the Senate President were members of the National Party of Nigeria that won most seats in the Parliament, and the Speaker of the House was member of Nigerian Peoples Party, thereby shutting the Yoruba out again. Since the return of democratic politics in 1979, the formation of government after elections followed the same pattern of political negotiations influenced by ethnic concerns. The political interest of the ethnic groups determined who occupy what political position or office in any government

formed. The operation of democracy and governance in Nigeria featured prominently in Diamond's (1999), Adigun A B. Agbaje's (2004) studies too. The same is true about power configuration and development policies of the elected governments since 1999 to 2011, which featured prominently in the works and commentaries of many scholars.

Coding Ethnic Mindset as a tool for political Bargaining in Nigeria, with regards to how politics is played in the country by the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, is an innovative contribution to the study of political development and political sociology. The underlying logic of coding is that but for the political alliance through ethnic interest bargaining, the most visible legacy of the 1960s parliamentary democracy in Nigeria, the need to revise the political system to presidential democracy could not have been realised. Furthermore, coding "Ethnic Mindset" as tool for political bargaining is based on the logic and premise that the administrative and the political characters, institutional structures and even the election patterns of the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani all revolve and mould the Nigerian democratic landscape and put into place in large part the outcome of elections and configuration of power in Nigeria, and certainly through the fears created by opposing interests of the three primordial groups.

#### **14.4. Applying the H-G scheme in the case study of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria.**

An ethnological theory-driven case study like this one often strives to analyse and interpret a chosen case in light of existing theories. As often is the practice, the aim is to subject the case to more careful analysis in attempt to validate, modify, or replace existing theories with new and more valid ones (Ejiogu 2004). The factors in democratic failures in societies that evolved from circumstances similar to the ones that led to the amalgamation of the nationalities that combined to produce Nigeria have been studied in the past and also through different theoretical perspectives. Following a careful search we arrived at a decision that Horowitz's Ranked and Unranked theory and Geertz's primordial loyalty scheme have never been applied to the examination of democratic success and failure factors through Ethnic Mindset in Nigeria or any of the 'divided societies' elsewhere. The application of ranked and

unranked theory and primordial loyalty theory here is another theoretical contribution to democracy and political sociology. Ranked and Unranked theory and also primordial loyalty theory are based on “the structure of, Mindset and the relations among, different Ethnic groups in a divided society” (Horowitz 2000, Geertz 1963). Developed by Donald L. Horowitz and Clifford Geertz the theory of primordial loyalty has been elaborated by Arend Lijphart (1977).

#### **14. 5. Implications of the H-R and G-PL Schemes for Theory and Sociological Research**

Many theoretical arguments made about democratic politics in Nigeria and other hitherto existing democratic aspiring states that resulted from Europe’s colonial intervention in Africa have been exposed to critical review by the application of the H-G scheme in the present study. Other African countries like Kenya, and Uganda, and many more likes of the ‘Nigerian’ state have lacked stability in their central government since the end of formal colonial rule. However, there is no doubt that aspects of orthodox arguments about their political instability are off-mark. First, orthodox arguments tend to assume that products of British’s colonial intervention are givens; that simply implies that they are age-old polities that emerged on the consent of the diverse nationalities that were made to constitute them.

Second, such orthodox arguments tend to stress that the determinants for the success of democratic politics or the failure of it in Nigeria are largely dependent on the element of corruption by the political elites. But unfortunately the democratic failure in Nigeria can be directly discovered in what Horowitz calls the “ranked and unranked societies”, (Horowitz 2000: 22). The emphasis can as well be placed on what Horowitz defined as the “super-ordination and subordination” (Horowitz 2000: 23). However the orthodox arguments using corruption as the determinants of democratic success in Nigeria, ignoring the power of “Ethnic Mindset” in the political landscape is insufficient to rely on for comprehensive valid explanations. By emphasizing that the primordial loyalty inherent in a society with regard to relations between ethnic groups is the determinant of democratic success or its failure in an unranked polity like Nigeria; the H-G scheme enables anyone who is interested in embarking on the kind of sociological inquiry that we just conducted on “ Democracy

and Good Governance in a Multiethnic Nigeria” based on “grassroots’ study of the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani” to do so in a manner that the independent variables of interest include “both power configuration and primordial loyalties” at the same time, and not each separately” (Geertz 1963:109-113). It makes a lot of sociological sense to do so. This is particularly for the reason that by so doing, recognition is accorded to the three diverse ethnic nationalities that were compelled through the instrument of force to constitute the product of colonial order.

The individuals who reside in the various ethnic homelands in Nigeria as created by the British colonial authority belong primarily to their respective indigenous society and identify only peripherally with the overall national identity. They are products of the socialization processes provided by their respective indigenous societies. It is indeed the socialization that they receive in their formative years that prepares them for the various roles that they play in the course of their life. That fact is too important to be ignored in the quest to explain the roots and causes of democratic failures in Nigeria. The socio-psychological base of argument that defined the influence of “Ethnic Mindset” as held by the three ethnic nationalities in Nigeria is that, which confirmed that “each group has its own ancestral homeland located far away from others, worship God through different religion, has own customs and traditions, has distinct indigenous language, and has own political philosophy and interests” made it imperative to submit that to decouple the “primordial loyalties” of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, as these loyalties constitute largely the “failure factors” in democratic performance of Nigeria, there is the need to properly recognise their importance in deciding anything Nigerian.

But, that indigenous solidarity and feelings in each of the ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigerian has not disappeared. Furthermore, given that the norms and political behaviour that make crucial difference in the political activities as well as social thinking undertaking by individuals from the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani nationalities are still those that they learn through the realm of ethnic solidarity. The H-R scheme and G-PL scheme drive the arguments made in the study to the effect that the combination of the diverse nationalities with their own respective ethnic political philosophies and as practiced before 1960 and after 1960 by politicians from the three ethnic groups in the democratic transition of Nigeria produced latent internal

conflicts that have continued until now to manifest and exacerbate themselves is sociologically and logically valid. We have applied a combination of frameworks of Horowitz, Geertz, and mine to understand and present the analysis of why the success of democracy in Nigeria and the “failure factor” is dependent on the negative effect of “Ethnic Mindset” by the three largest ethnic nationalities in the country.

## 14.6 Hypotheses.

### *The Four Hypotheses*

The above assertions and as derived from the 2011 presidential election in the country are captured diagrammatically in their succinct essence in Figure 9.1a,b,c,d, 9.2,a,b and 9.3,a,b and c. (see Chapter 9). The values in the diagram are products of three main political factors that relate to the independent and dependent variables respectively (see figure 14.1 below). However, parts of the three factors are contained in the four study hypotheses, below. Nevertheless, Nigeria as a multi-ethnic country presented an unambiguous variable factors for studies on “divided societies.” Then, the ethnic configuration of the country and the degree of ethnic mindset as attached to the primordial loyalties in the various communities determine the success or failure of democracy.

Dependent and Independent Variables		
	Location of Ancestral homeland	Separated
	Structure of the 3 ethnic groups	Non-ranking
	Presence of regional political Party.	Strong
	Use of local Language	Effective
	Political interaction and cooperation between the three ethnic nationalities	Weak
	Degree of ethnic representation in the national government	Strong

Table 14.1, Dependent and Independent variables (source Okoro 2012).

**Hypothesis 1:** *Given the high degree of ethnic and political animosity in the past among the three ethnic groups that composed the greater part of the Nigerian State, the chances that ethnic influenced political mindset will cease to be an issue in post 1999 return to democratic politics was high.*

**Hypothesis 2:** *Given the high level of cultural differences amongst the three ethnic nationalities, the possibility that Democracy will minimise the cleavages associated with primordial loyalties in societies was moderately high within a greater segment of the three ethnic nationalities in 1999*

**Hypothesis 3:** *Given the nature of human and ideological forces that combined to return democratic politics in the country, the assumption that the regional political tendencies that characterise politics in Nigeria in the past will diminish was very high.*

**Hypothesis 4:** *The greater the number of diverse ethnic nationalities consummated into a single political entity, without a negotiated political identity by the nationalities themselves, the more difficult it will be for such a political environment to form a negotiated political pattern.*

**Hypothesis 1** is essentially the application of some of the Horowitz and Lijphart proposition on the role of democratic politics in a divided society. As can be observed from figure 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, and 14.1, the insight about the role of democratic politics as a stabiliser in a divided society can be applied to Nigeria political situation with the role of the three ethnic nationalities through their primordial sentiments as determining factors.

In contrast, **Hypotheses 2** and **3** are derived from Horowitz's framework for describing the structure of a society as well as various political units that make major decisions affecting the nation. **Hypothesis 2** focuses on the differences among the three major constituent parts whereas **Hypothesis 3** focuses on the regional solidarity and politics of accommodation as displayed by individuals and groups from the three parts in their bid to promote democracy.

Finally, **Hypothesis 4** is my formulation, which I want to use to highlight the unintended consequences of a society so constructed through an alien motivated interest, without the participation of the population; and the negative ethnic mindset that it could create if such societies intend becoming a democratic aspiring society, especially when the diverse nationalities in such society do not share the same



primordial loyalty. The unalloyed support for ethnic influenced political mindset and the strong preference for regional solidarity as it exists among the three ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani created a disconnect to the central aim of unifying under the principles and common value of democratic politics. The urge to adore one's ethnic group primordial symbols created an inevitable socio-cultural as well as political schism between ethnic groups and among the three ethnic nationalities under review in this study. This goes further to explain the ugly outcome of the April 2011 presidential election in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, political parties, power configuration in the central government, fragmentation of the society as reflected in the relations among the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, and the preference for ethnic and regional political solidarity in supports of candidates during elections, and in addition to primordial loyalties are standard sociological concepts that appear to be vaguely addressed in the Horowitz and Geertz frameworks relative to democratic politics, that is ranking and the primordial symbols framework. My framework represents a way of coding the effect of ethnic mindset in democratic politics in a clear term and offers a link for proper understanding internal political contradictions in a divided society. Furthermore, considering the long held belief in democratic politics beginning from Diamond (1997), Lijphart (1977), Chazan (1993), Ihonvbere (1985), that corruption is one of the major factors impeding the success of democracy and by implication political stability in Nigeria, but the overall effect of ethnic conscious politics, religion and regional political solidarity as was the case in April 2011 in Nigeria, are more significant. Primordial loyalties create the basis for democratic failure especially in situations that approximate the circumstances that obtained in the Northern and Eastern Nigeria where two different scenarios played out during the April 2011 presidential election.

#### **14.7. The Importance of the Independent Variables**

Figure 14.1, shown above captured the evidence for the primordial factors that influenced political relations and the issue of ranking in a divided society as it concerned each of the three nationalities that form the basis of this study, and our analysis on each one of them. We tabled the condition for political relations among the nationalities in Chapter four. In table 14.2 and 14.3 below, one can notice the great differences in the mode of political alliance and other social and political

variables amongst them. Their choice of political alliance partner varies in terms of people and regions. There are variations between them on the issue of national identity, political parties, voting pattern, and mindset. The APGA, a political party described as an Igbo regional party was able to control only two states in the Eastern part of the country, and the party is not powerful enough to win the presidential election, but the Igbo as an ethnic group is well represented in the government and in other federal government agencies more than the Yoruba, particularly as shown in Tables 9.3 - 9.8.

The Igbo have no problem aligning with the Hausa-Fulani of northern Nigeria at the federal level, but it does not translate to abandoning their negative worldview about the Hausa-Fulani and everything that the Northerners represent in the country. Interestingly, the Yoruba who exploited ethnic political philosophy for decades end-up always in the opposition. They often claimed that the politics at the federal level never favoured their political aspiration. So, the political intentions of the Yoruba revolved around their regional political party. The mindset of the Yoruba towards the Igbo and Hausa-Fulani contributed to the reluctance of the Yoruba to form alliances with any of the other two ethnic nationalities. The Yoruba are apprehensive of the Hausa-Fulani, and at the same suspicious and uncomfortable with the Igbo. The Hausa-Fulani on the other hand, have been a major factor in every ruling party in the country. There is never any democratic government elected without the Hausa-Fulani north controlling major part of the government, in fact, the Hausa-Fulani dominated northern Nigeria has been participating in every formed administration since 1960 independence. The active role and participation of the Hausa-Fulani was a consistent feature in the political administration of the country.

The Primordial symbols, which feature persistently in the internal political arrangement of the three ethnic nationalities in the 1960s, continue to dictate the direction of democratic politics up to the present democratic dispensation as proved by the April 2011 presidential election (figure 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3). The system of ethnic solidarity as well as regional solidarity served as a bond amongst the three ethnic people of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, this evolved as indigenous and functional components of identity consciousness. However, in Hausaland solidarity goes beyond mere regional consciousness, the society was fully defined by its detachment

from the Igbo and Yoruba. Unlike in Igboland and Yorubaland, Islamic religion created a 'control society' in Hausaland, which aided the political elites in the region to formulate political positions with the sole aim of protecting their common slogan of "One North" as against the rest of other regions interest and the country as a whole.

However, in Yorubaland, the political philosophy and platform that Obafemi Awolowo established is what the ethnic group has been building on to sustain their political agenda. They created for themselves the solidarity symbol represented by the late politician. The leading political party in Yorubaland is a party formed with the political ideology of Obafemi Awolowo. The political party is today not just the dominant party but the ruling party in Yorubaland. The Obafemi Awolowo political ideology was able to engender a political mindset within Yorubaland, which evolved like a revolution and that has made them to stick together and remain together as a group and not minding the politics at the federal level.

The variations in the location of ancestral homelands and the mode of society organisation in the three nationalities are vividly clear and without any ambiguity. The same is true about the various societal issues that defined each of the three nationalities on how democratic politics should be structured through certain fundamental features that we designated as primordial loyalties. We have already discussed each one of them in detail in Chapter three. The abysmal failure in the performance of democratic politics in Nigeria is significantly affected by all these sets of variables.

#### **14.8. Discoveries about Negative Ethnic Political Mindset: Going through the Hypotheses.**

What then are the causes of democratic failure in Nigeria from mid 1960s to 2011? The main causes or put differently, the answers to the question are clearly displayed in the contents of the preceding chapters. In the following **Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4**, it is clear to see that when different societies that have different level of development in their social, and political socialisation, and as well as being structured under the influence of a common primordial sentiment are merged together to form a unit; particularly, by an external power, there are chances for high degree of political anxiety and antagonism among the different societies. Furthermore, they argued vehemently that the processes through which societies emerged has lots to say

about the nature or the kind of democratic stability such societies would experience in the long run. The findings as contained in chapter 4, 5 and 9 strongly support the analysis in Hypotheses 1, 2 and 4.

The analysis in chapter 1 and 3 explains how the three ethnic nationalities of the Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba created their individual homelands and the traditional method of community structure. In the eastern region, the Igbo, who organised their society under a village-based democracy, and also under a unique socio-cultural system and organisation did not use means of violence to organise their homeland. However, in the western region of the country, the homeland of the Yoruba ethnic group, they used means of violence to organise their homeland. According to scholars in Yoruba history, the ethnic group, the Yoruba were able to organise their society under a central political structure. They established functional and constitutional institutions within their homelands (Ajayi and Smith 1971, Akintoye 1970, Akintoye 1966).

As observed in the pre-independence, as well as in the post-independent Nigeria, the Igbo and the Yoruba as well as the Hausa-Fulani did not have any kind of political affinity or relationship. Political alliance existed between the NCNC dominated by the Igbo, and the NPC dominated by the Hausa-Fulani in 1963, that is only few years after the independence of the country, and again in 1979 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> republic between the National Party of Nigeria, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani, though a quasi-national Party in outlook, and the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) dominated by the Igbo as well (Figure 14.2, and Figure 14.3) below. There was no any evidence that shows that there was any sort of political solidarity between the Igbo and the Yoruba, and there was also no single trace of political intermingling within or outside the Igbo and Yoruba *homelands*.

Post Republic Election and Coalition Government.				
Year	Democratic System	Coalition Partners	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
1963-1966	Parliamentary Democracy	NPC		Hausa-Fulani
		NCNC		Igbo
			AG	Yoruba

Table 14.2 Presentation of the 1963 post-independence Coalition Government (Source Okoro 2011)

Defect Presidential Democracy and Government.				
Year	Democratic System	Coalition Partners	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
1979-1983	Presidential	NPN		Hausa-Fulani
		NPP		Igbo
			UPN	Yoruba

Table 14.3 Presentation of the 1979 Presidential coalition Government (Source Okoro 2011)

One can observe from the type of political relationship that existed between the Igbo politicians and the Yoruba politicians, who happened to have their homelands in the southern part of the country. The Igbo politicians choose to align with the Hausa-Fulani northern Nigeria instead of the Yoruba. The Hausa-Fulani on the other hand, did not also find it convenient forming any political alliance with the Yoruba. However, there is no available evidence to show why there was no political alliance between the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba, both in the 1<sup>st</sup> republic political dispensation and in the 1979 democratic politics in the country. Even since the 1999 return to democratic politics, the Yoruba have refused to identify deeply with politics at the centre. But one significant fact is that the three ethnic nationalities, like in pre-1999, still depend on their individual homelands to secure elective post, or to win elections.

The analysis in Chapter 4, 5 and 6 further shows that negative ethnic mindset has a double-edged capacity to aid a group in a divided society to seek political alliance with another possible hostile group than the other, on one hand, and as well as to create the potential for political antagonism with another in the same polity on the other. That double-edged capacity was evident among the three ethnic nationalities

of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani, though the first two mentioned ethnic groups share some sort of commonality in their primordial loyalties but still do not agree with each other politically. The political alliance that existed between the Igbo and Hausa-Fulani in the mid 1960s federal elections, as well as the 1979 presidential election can be traced to negative political mindset. It could also be argued that the Igbo politicians do not want to divide the country into North and South. Hence, they refused to align with the Yoruba in the two election periods.

The analysis proved, too, in the finding that political alliance in post-independence Nigeria was between two ethnic nationalities that do not share the same primordial loyalties (Geertz 1963: 109:113). That evidence was further strengthened in the 1979 presidential election as the Igbo dominated NPP joined the Hausa-Fulani dominated NPN to form a coalition government at the expense of the Yoruba dominated UPN. Political alliance between the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani led northern Nigeria did not emerge on the premise of common primordial group, and the inability of the Yoruba and Igbo to forge common southern political alliance against the North can as well be attributed to political rivalry and distrust between the politicians from the two parts of southern Nigeria. Instead, both political eras saw the Yoruba playing the opposition. Put differently; we found that negative mindset in an unranked ethnic society (Horowitz 2000) like Nigeria, would usually create political discomfort and harden political positions among the component units.

On the strength of the enumerated discoveries we can argue that the unranked nature in the Nigerian polity, with regard to the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani was responsible for the one sided political alliance. But there is a similarity between the 1960s political structures in the post-independence Nigeria, and the April 2011 political organisation by politicians from the three ethnic nationalities. The April 2011 national election further showed the continued effort of the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups to reassert their political philosophy and dominance in their various ethnic homelands. The attempt by politicians from the three nationalities in Nigeria in April 2011 to reassert their political philosophy is well noticed in the incidents that followed the 2011 presidential election. In the post-independence period, members of the three ethnic nationalities embarked on different means to create strong political solidarity and promote greater political participation within their homelands, though with eyes pointing towards other regions.

In the April 2011 presidential election, the story is similar compared to post-independence political outcome of 1960s as represented in figure 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3, 14.2 and 14.3 above. (Note: Figures 9.1, 9. 2 and 9.3 are cited in chapter 9).

Since the return of democratic politics in the country, the incidence of political solidarity and promotion of political participation in each nationality has been plagued by fear of exclusion through the peoples' perception of the country's power configuration. So, each ethnic group has been trying to align with one group or the other in a bid to have strong saying in the power structure of the country. The Igbo and Yoruba in particular have not come over their political gulf since the pre-1960 political antagonism. They have been flogging each other with negative perception in the political development of the country. But unlike the situation with the Yoruba, the political perception between the Igbo politicians and the Hausa-Fulani politicians has been positive ever since 1960s. In a similar development, we discovered that while there was enthusiasm that the Yoruba would align with another political party and candidate from the Hausa-Fulani North in the April 2011 presidential election, but there was a complete turn-around during the election, as the Yoruba regional political party the Action Congress back-off their alliance talk with Congress for Progressive Change, that confirms the belief that the Yoruba never sincerely supported any candidate who is of Hausa-Fulani extraction.

The politics of mindset as displayed by the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani has remained undaunted in the three homelands and among the people of the three regions. The carnage that followed the outcome of the April 2011 presidential election in the Northern part of the country was based on the premise of negative mindset. The violent incident was a reaction to the loss of the presidential election by one of the candidates from the northern part of Nigeria, and who incidentally was a Hausa-Fulani. These findings are supported by the results from a collection of political intrigues that happened from 1960s to 2011 as shown in Table 14.2, Table 14.3, above and Table 14.4,14.5, and 14.6 below. They clearly proved that the power configuration at the national level during democratic periods in the country has been between the Hausa-Fulani northern Nigeria and the rest of the country. The Igbo led eastern region had a coalition government with the Hausa-Fulani on two occasions (1963 and 1979), leaving the Yoruba in the opposition. But

since 1999, the top two positions in the government have been between the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba. In essence, the Hausa-Fulani have been participating in every government formed since Independence without any break.

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
1999-2003	Democratic System	Party	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
	Presidential	PDP		Yoruba – Hausa(Kanuri)
			APP/AD	

Table 14.4 Presentation of the 1999-2003 post military democratic government (Source Okoro 2011)

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
2003-2007	Democratic System	Party	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
	Presidential	PDP		Yoruba-Hausa(Kanuri)
			ANPP/AD	

Table 14.5 Presentation of the 2003-2007 presidential election and government (Source Okoro 2011)

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
2007-2011	Political System	Party	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
	Presidential	PDP		Hausa-Fulani-East (Ijaw)
			ANPP/ACN	

Table 14.6 Presentation of 2007-2011 government and ethnic balance (Source Okoro 2011)

In the presidential election of 2011, the Hausa-Fulani led northern part of the country arranged within their community to vote as a group for a particular candidate from the Hausa-Fulani area. In the democratic dispensation of the mid 1960s, that saw the political alignment between the Hausa-Fulani northern Nigeria and the Igbo led eastern Nigeria political block, as contained in (Figure 14.2) showed that the political alliance of that period was repeated in 1979 (Figure 14.3) return to civil rule in the country. From 1999 to 2007, which coincides also with the disengagement of the military from the political scene of the country, Figure 14.4 and 14.6 proved that the pattern of political alignment took a different dimension as the age-long mindset



effect produced another voting pattern and political philosophy in the country. But in 2007-2011, the voting pattern produced another power configuration, though almost in line with the mid 1960s and 1979 government structure. The contents in Figure 14.4, 14.5 and 14.6, shows and explains more about the elections and the alignment pattern across the three ethnic nationalities and the political parties involved.

The analytical part in chapter five explained more about Hypothesis 2, which contends that the political antagonism among the three ethnic nationalities is a confirmation of the peoples' negative perception of the Nigerian state, as regards the nationalities that constitute the country. The discoveries in the analysis of the chapter proved that ethnic mindset shaped the political alignment and alliances that existed among the three ethnic nationalities. A confirmation of this assertion can also be based on the fact that all the democratic elections in the country since independence have been shaped and determined on the premise of primordial loyalty (Geertz 1963). That is, just like Table 5.2, 5.10 and 5.20, or as presented in Figure 5.2, 5.12 and 5.19 indicated in chapter five.

Furthermore, the same analysis of chapter five shows that the political relationship between the Igbo and the Yoruba has been poles apart since the 1960s democratic dispensation in the country. Not even the absence of the 1960s politicians from the Igbo and the Yoruba ethnic nationalities could change the dynamics of politics in the two homelands. The effect of negative ethnic mindset impacted heavily on the political relationship that existed among the three ethnic groups, so much so that it led to a serious contraction of the political space. The political philosophy of 1960s in Yorubaland was subsequently recreated in 1979, 1999, and 2011 all in a bid to reassert their control of the region.

The context of the analysis and discoveries in chapter 7 and chapter 9 also give support to the ideals in Hypothesis 3. The discoveries as contained in chapter 7 and chapter 9 are used to confirm that negative ethnic mindset has remained the greatest hindrance to having a functional democratic politics geared towards making the country stable and under the very principles of democracy. It was also discovered in the two chapters mentioned above that the rigid stance of the politicians and peoples of the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani impeded and

contracted the political space in the country. The findings of this study also show that the clinging on their primordial loyalties by the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani to determine the direction of politics in the country inhibited free flow of constructive democratic deliberation in the country. And as a result of the imbalance in the structure of the Nigerian federation, ethnic and regional political interest often overshadow national cohesion, as every group is concerned about its political fortune and the dangers it could face, should it fail to bargain aggressively. According to Tsurutani (1968:911), in his argument on how to construct comparative analysis on political stability in a given political environment, he insisted that a structured society cannot command the overall trust and confidence of the people within such a society, but would only enjoy a restricted support, as the people engage each other in political acrimony. As this applies to Nigeria being an outside interest structured society, “productive democratic support” in the interest of the country as a unit would be elusive and fragile.

Horowitz’s “ranked and unranked society” scheme from which we structured Hypothesis 3 Suggest that a formed “government” in a divided society with unranked components will inversely produce a fragile political association, as diverse interest will always undermine the chances for cohesiveness in the national interest (Horowitz 2000). That position is highly supported by the finding, which confirmed that high level political alliance talk ensued between the three ethnic nationalities after the country’s independent in 1960; and this is particularly between the Igbo led eastern Nigeria and the Hausa-Fulani led northern Nigeria.

Based on the facts contained in Hypothesis 1 and 2, as well as the analysed information in chapters 5, 6, 9, and 11, it is discovered that just like in 1960s first republic democratic dispensation, the 1979 and the 1999 to 2011 democratic politics in the country did not differ either in scope or by its acrimonious nature among the three ethnic nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. It confirmed also, the cold political relation between the Igbo and the Yoruba as a product manufactured even before the independent of the country. The values in Table 14.4, 14.5 and 14.6 confirmed that ethnic influenced political mindset among the ethnic nationalities and particularly between the Yoruba and Igbo on one hand and between the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani on the other hand, has been in the political scene of the country

right from the pre-independence era. The Tables and the values therein demonstrate that after the disengagement of the British colonial government from the country in 1960s, the pre-independence political rivalry among the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo did not abate, rather it was modified in 1979 national election under presidential democracy, and the modification produced the same political arrangement as was the case in 1963 parliamentary democracy. The Information contained in Table 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 shows a different political outcome in 2011, as against the usual and known political decision from the nationalities. In Yorubaland and Igboland, the political direction as observed in the presidential and other national election proved that the country still treads the same old navigational route.

In the April 2011 presidential election, the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani repeated their age-long voting pattern, guided by the same primordial indices of 1960s, the Yoruba on one hand chose to go its usual way, by rejecting the candidature of a Hausa-Fulani, though they did not vote massively or enthusiastically for the candidate the Igbo people voted for, but the Yoruba clearly showed their disdain for anything Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria's politics. The Yoruba displayed its voting trade mark in the federal state elections and in election for national parliament by voting for candidates of Yoruba regional party.

According to Hypothesis 4, which suggested that the greater the number of diverse ethnic nationalities consummated into a single political entity, without a negotiated political identity by the nationalities themselves, the more difficult it will be for such a political environment to form a negotiated political pattern is confirmed through the values in Map 9.1 (in chapter 9), and Tables 9.1, 9, 2 and Table 9.3 (see Chapter 9). The present political dispensation in Nigeria is deeply characterised by gigantic rise in the rate of stereotyping and ethnic mindset influenced political campaigns. Political disagreement based on individual or personality clash has resulted in accusations, people leaning toward regional or ethnic based political parties and interest. It assumed more precarious dimensions as the differences displayed are no longer based on the political calculation of the politicians alone, but it has equally incorporated the general public into displaying serious opinion about other nationalities.

The most confused scenario of negative ethnic mindset influenced by attachment to primordial sentiments is presented in Map 9.1 (see chapter 9). The values in the diagram explain more about the deep seated disenchantment the Hausa-Fulani and the Southern part of the country hold for each other. The analysis as presented in chapter five gives credence to Hypothesis 4, which argues that the greater the number of diverse ethnic nationalities consummated into a single political entity, without a negotiated political identity by the nationalities themselves, the more difficult it will be for such a political environment to form a negotiated political pattern.

It goes on to argue that in any society where the foundation is constructed without any meaningful contribution or total control of the process by the people themselves, such society when constructed will create cleavages moulded in deviant, and antagonistic tendencies. When Nigeria was put together by the colonial British government in 1914, there was no consultation or request for approval for such an endeavour from the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. The question that rose from the exercise is that, how can people be joined together without their consent, and one still expects such a union to move on without skirmishes.

Part of the findings as contained in chapter five confirm that the three tribal groups have nothing tangible in common capable of holding their union together, and that is contrary to the wide belief and anticipation of many people in the early 1960s that despite their confirmed differences as represented by their primordial sentiments, the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani would forge ahead. Then, promotion and sustenance of democratic politics in the artificially constructed union becomes a Herculean task. The Hausa-Fulani society was that built on the dictate of an autocratic figure in the personality of the emir, and the Yoruba society was equally on the premise of constitutionality and responsibility to the cultural institution, while the Igbo society was built on communal democratic practice. To whip the different traditional political nomenclatures into a foreign or alien political culture, particularly in a society that is artificially constructed, cannot be said to be easy. The findings in chapter five further confirm the fundamental issues distinguishing the three ethnic groups from each other. Figures 5.2, 5.12, and 5.19 in chapter five confirm the differences as represented by the opinions of the people within the three ethnic homelands. The

findings in chapter five confirm also the argument in chapter 6 and 9 that negative ethnic mindset is the salient factor that shapes the democratic politics in Nigeria.

Generally, we have established that not even the change to presidential democratic system of governance in 1979 could change the ethnic mindset as already established in the Nigerian system at the middle of 1950s. And the ground norms that promoted mindset factor among the three nationalities of Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and Igbo were equally preserved by politicians from all the three tribal groups after independence. They transmitted and entrenched the idea into the general thinking of the people that, they are politically marginalised and dominated by others. The created fear and apprehension instilled in the public the mindset of hate, and thereby motivated their resolve to believe that, they are fundamentally different. The desire to protect their individual ethnic political interests motivated the Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and Igbo to develop a strong identity mindset, irrespective of the political system in the country; the “mindset” so developed further confined them to always depend on their ethnic support in every election since 1963.

The problem generated by the inability of the three ethnic groups to agree on the need for the termination of the colonial government created additional confrontations among them, particularly the Hausa-Fulani venting their anger against the Igbo and Yoruba. For instance a bid by Yoruba and Igbo politicians to convince the northern politicians and public on the need for instant demand for Independence did not go down well with the Northern public. The politicians from the two ethnic nationalities of Igbo and Yoruba had gone to Kano in 1953 a prominent town in the Hausa-Fulani belt to campaign for immediate independence from the British colonial government. But their adventure resulted in a serious violent attack on the southerners’ resident in the town of Kano.

We found equally in chapter four that mindset generated by the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani continues to motivate the politicians and which made them to rely on their ethnic and tribal political parties to challenge each other toward the occupation of the national government. It would be argued to have emanated from the failure of the politicians in 1950s to forge a national consciousness as the country approached independence. This same scenario was repeated in pre-1999 by the Pro-democracy

groups. Like the 1950s politicians who in their hurry to force the colonial government out from the country failed to articulate a national consciousness, thereby leaving the future fate of the country to be determined by ethnic and regional political interests. The pre-1999 pro-democracy group also failed to plan effectively about the future and structure of politics in the country. Instead, they occupied their thinking and effort on how to force the military out of power; and when the military left the politicians had no ready-made plan on how to evolve new political thinking, but to fall back to the old political system defined by ethnic political cleavages.

In support of the argument that the style of politics and political campaigns carried out by the Nigerians from 1950s to early 1980s laid the foundation for the type of politics that existed from 1999 to 2011 can be traced to the conversation between Ahmadu Bello and Nnamdi Azikiwe. In that discussion, it was reported that Ahmadu Bello told Nnamdi Azikiwe bluntly, that they needed to recognise that they are Christians-Easterners, and Muslims-Northerners respectively, before they could be able to forge a viable society together (Paden 1986:3). The nature of politics played by the nationalists in the 1950s and 1960s as well as late 1970s was reintroduced and maintained by the present political class in the country. The perception within the three ethnic populations remained the same and unchanged with regard to negative perception about others. The political philosophies and the style of campaigns by the politicians and the political parties prepared the populations of the three ethnic groups differently and as such installed different political opinions in the three ethnic homelands.

It is discovered that the political policy and structure left behind by the departing British colonial government in Nigeria created a foundation on which the present political structure emerged. In essence, the system produced an imbalance, self perpetuating mindset among the three nationalities and which subsequently divided the country into North and South on one hand, and further divided the Southern part into East and West. It is also discovered that the departing colonial government left an unstable political environment, an environment that lacked national cohesion, a society that is so divided in variegated ways, with the politicians fighting to protect their various ethnic interests. And in the process the space for the development of democratic values becomes so diminished.

In a bid to have a comprehensive study about the effect of ethnic mindset on democracy in Nigeria, we posed a range of theoretical questions in Chapter One to guide us in the study. However, each of those questions provided problems that we tried to explore in the course of our study. One among the issues posed by some of the theoretical questions deals with the persistence of ethnic influenced political mindset from 1960s short-lived democratic transition period to present time democratic politics in the country, and indeed ethnic mindset which propelled the actions taken by members of the three ethnic nationalities.

We tried to establish that the foundation of ethnic mindset among the three ethnic nationalities was laid far back in the 1950s, and we also tried to establish that the ethnic influenced politics was bequeathed to the present political players by the nationalists who controlled the political arena from the 1960s to late 1983. We equally tried to argue that the present political players from the three ethnic nationalities carried on from where the independence politicians stopped. The political philosophy remained the same, with changes only in the personalities who controlled the political parties. The search for further evidence that they persist could be an important topic for future research. But the issues raised by those questions have policy implications as far as the success for democratic politics in Nigeria is concerned.

The findings in the study support the argument that the success of democratic politics in the country is not possible under the present structure of Nigeria. For democracy to be successful in any human society it must reflect the realities and aspirations of the inhabitants of any given geographical space. In a multiethnic environment like the Nigerian where the structure of the country comes through a foreign imposition, and where power configuration in the society is structured along ethnic affiliation. So, to make democracy successful in Nigeria, there is the need to have new national identity, an identity that is appealing to the three ethnic nationalities covered by this study. And in doing so, the new to be formed socio-political arrangements must acknowledge and accommodate the respective socio-cultural and political philosophies of the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. To do that is the only way through which the specific primordial elements inherent in the various societies, and

which ultimately determine their political reaction in the larger Nigeria political environment can be minimised.

Looking at the primordial loyalties of the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, and the elements factored therein, it would be right to say that racial and ethnic nationalities 'have political rights as well as claims (Geertz 1963, Van Dyke 1971 and 1974) and obligations that needed to be acknowledged in human societies (Huntington 1982). This is so particularly as it concerned the success of democratic politics. The society model of organizing the affairs of a state in Western Europe and North America is unsuitable for Nigeria (Lewis 1965:64). The traditional political systems and socio-cultural organization as well as the entire primordial loyalties of the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani of Nigeria are the 'existential features and claims' the British colonial government could not acknowledge before leaving the country. However, it does not translate to mean that one is oblivious of the intentions and motives of the British colonial intervention in Nigeria.

The British's political capacity building endeavours in Nigeria were meant to establish the institutional structures that could promote and perpetuate her economic interest in the country. As was explained before, in our attempts to elaborate on the nature of governance in Hausaland at the era of the Habe kings and also in the post-*jihad* era under the control of the Fulani; it takes only an ill-informed society to be ruled and exploited by tyrants. The structure of Nigeria is a typical case of divided societies where the people are not in any way connected to each other. Despite the jettison of parliamentary democracy inherited from the British colonial government, and the subsequent adoption of presidential democracy in 1979 till date, both systems ended up producing similar results.

Speaking in comparative terms of Western European society and Sub-Saharan African society, Arthur Lewis (1965) tried to establish that the mindset pattern in a Sub-Saharan Africa society, which Nigeria represents, is so diverse and has no resemblance to a typical British or Western Europe monolithic thinking society. Like the Igbo, the homogeneity of Yorubas' socio-cultural identity and political philosophy created a fruitful environment for them to formulate a policy of self preservation as an



integral component in their democratic exploits and bargaining with the Igbo and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria.

But unlike the Hausa-Fulani community where the society was converted to fiefdoms of the Sokoto Caliphate, with the society fragmented and stratified, and the people left with no direct link to those within the emirate council, the Igbo society is without doubt open and free. The Igbo operated a republican and quasi-democratic political structure, where decision-making mechanism is highly inclusive, as every adult male is entitled to participate in decision-making. The differences that existed among the three ethnic nationalities of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani in the pre-independent era was preserved through the post-independent period and subsequently handed over to political leaders in the three ethnic homelands. This accounts also for the non-developmental policy oriented democratic politics since 1999.

Each ethnic group preferred to depend on its ancestral homeland and region for greater political relevance. Each group moulded its political interest through ethnic solidarity based on primordial symbols. The identity structure that the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani operated on during the pre-independent period was carried on to the 1960s political transition, retained during the many years of military adventure in Nigerian politics, and further to the 1999 return to presidential democracy till date. Nevertheless, the issues and factors that divided the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani remained untouched and unresolved despite the presence of democratic politics since 1999. The introduction of democratic politics is yet to suppress their mindset pattern against each other and create national identity. As was in the 1960s and 1979, ethnic political mindsets from among the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani have continued to determine the scope and success of democratic politics in Nigeria. All these succeeded in creating only “multiple balance without majority dominance.”

## **Conclusion**

While the institutional framework of a united Nigeria inexorably marches on, the fabric of a shared national Nigerian identity lags behind. But, the realisation that this identity is badly needed should be obvious, if one looks deeper into the founding principles of the Nigerian Federation. The preamble of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution did not proclaim to say that “While remaining proud of their individual ethnic identities and history, peoples of Nigeria are determined to transcend their divisions and, united ever more closely, to forge a common destiny”. There is no common destiny, however, unless there is a sense of cohesion. Only common identity promotes it, but a united Nigeria, for the time being, rests only on vague notions of rights and prosperity as enshrined in the federal Constitution of 1999 and the co-habitation of citizens within other regions.

If the post-1999 Nigeria politicians views themselves morally bound to create a peaceful and prosperous society that will bring to the people the dividend of democracy through Good Governance, then it is not the electorate who elected them that need to do it. They the politicians are the ones to create the enabling environment, whereby no individual will have any cause to feel cheated or sidelined. It is easy to proclaim it, but it is equally difficult to implement. It is the opinion of this Author that ethnic sentiments stand out as the main cause of the trouble with democracy in Nigeria in the past, and which has persistently continued to the present. But, since ethnic political sentiments caused Nigeria’s political tragedies in the past, then rejection of ethnic based politics cannot be the sole responsibility or work of the governmental Institutions alone, it requires also the decisive effort of the entire Nigerian society, irrespective of ethnic, religious or regional affiliation.

Although, opponents of ethnic political loyalty see tribal nations as nothing different from self or group declaration of existence and not modern elaborations of quest for recognition, either way, for its critics, ethnic political loyalty is not only an intellectually flawed construct, but also a dangerous force. Whether one imagines it or not, it is the wrong kind of imagination. The push for a united Nigeria is animated by this view: self styled democrats support abandoning the old allegiances in favour of an identity built exclusively on a doctrine of rights, the abating of frontiers, and the triumph of a common political identity. Ethnic political loyalty, in the view of this group, invariably begets political insecurity.

But the greatest question has remained unanswered, and that is, if democracy actively discourages ethnocentrism and the identities that gave rise to it, can it offer an alternative? Ethnic political loyalty, even if based on a narrative that transcends the small confines of local identities, would still be a variant of ethnic identity and unquestionable to remain an artefact of powerful elites within the Nigerian State. Besides, an artificial national identity can hardly exist, if it does exist, it will still require the laborious input of these elites clamouring for one to arise. But can the people of the three ethnic nationalities transcend their local identities and forge a common identity based only on artefact values?

However, the argument put forward by liberal democratic theorists that politics in modern liberal societies can no longer be based on a simple dictates of group identity. This argument was roundly defeated by events and submissions generated in the three case study areas visited in Nigeria. It is so because the very idea of the rule of law, of equal legal treatment for everyone regardless of religion, wealth, gender or ethnicity, being preached as features of democratic politics conflicts with everything individuals' opinion from the three studied ethnic nationalities can offer. The responses generated from the different societies proved that at a very basic level, humans need to identify. As could be seen from the findings in chapter 5 of this study, abstract notions of common human universal values clash everyday with the choices public institutions must make on welfare distribution, political judgement and security protection. In making these choices by the government in Nigeria, priorities are usually based on ethnic identity, regional affiliation and religion. The dilemma of a State built on clusters of pebbles, suggests that those individuals within the confines of the formed State will dither and dissolve into soluble, when watered. As presented and argued in chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4, the foundational stones of Nigerian state was wrongly laid, and those who built up the House called Nigeria did not correct the deficiencies discovered. However, the consequences of non-redefinition of the country suggest that more narrowly based national identities will still matter in Nigeria. Reason for the above argument is that the primordial properties inherent in a tribes' heritage are more compelling to people than a national common set of symbols and institutions that only a few recognise as truly their own.

Opposition to local ethnic identities by democratic apologists casting it to represent a flawed and dangerous human philosophy is not only wrong but incorrect. Rather, what those who reject ethnic inclination in democratic politics should suggest need be

on the chances of integrating ethnic or tribal political philosophies into a more embracing institutional building where these philosophies are at variance with each other. In the case of Nigeria, the situation of the country has proved that the recognition of ethnic nationalism in the political equation of the democratic transition is not the remedy to the political malaise in the country, but indeed the only viable opposite. But then, democracy in the country without institutions structured on the strength of the tribal groups in the country will dither, because of the many fault lines in the Nigerian political landmass. Democracy is not necessarily going to offer a compelling alternative if there is no deviation from the existing structure, even after the amazing lure of freedom, liberty and the benefits it offers.

Political freedom or liberty is not an ethnic, blood and soil concept, but a mere abstract idea, implying equal legal, political and social rights for people inhabiting a given national space. But the question is, if the Nigerian State replaces politics moulded with ethnic identity claims with abstract national political identity, which actively advocates for the disposal of a powerful vehicle of integration and social cohesion of a people at a time, how realisable can it be, when not even the presence of large number of people from the various ethnic nationalities within the country and with alien cultures living side by side with native people could demand a vigorous policy of integration. It is of our belief that an abstract notion no matter how it is planned; will always remain abstract.

The question of national identity in Nigeria is an abstract exercise in lofty utopian philosophy. For Nigeria to function optimally there is the need for its people to be united by the bonds of common identity; unfortunately, this common bond was wrongly misplaced by the people entrusted with the leadership of the country, instead, ethnic concerns were top on the agenda of the various political office-holders. The urgency of the national identity was overlooked and was not attended to before the country was confronted by the conflicting loyalties of ethnic and national politics. But, national loyalty cannot be made depending solely on abstract laws. It is built on shared values as much as shared memories; but the opportunity was not utilised by those who assumed leadership of the country at various times, and so solution to the question of national identity was widely dependent on primordial heritage inherent in the ethnic nations. So, to command loyalty, Nigeria needs to be more than a geographical extension of territory that bestows rights to those who happen to inhabit it and castigates those holding onto allegiances considered both

historically, and democratically obsolete and socially pernicious, especially those allegiances that may hold the key to Nigeria's successful democratic transition.

As attested by several generated political opinions in this study, particularly in chapter 5, 6, 7 and chapter 9, it was evident that Nigeria's effort to replace local or indigenous mindset with a National political mindset devoid of ethnic sentiment is judged to be a serious illusion. Ideally, Nigeria's democratic project would need to create a fundamental national character of its own that is potent enough to give its citizens a sense of shared history as much as of shared identity. That alone would be an arduous task; this is because pre-existing ethnic political loyalties are obstacles to any new political identity that is striving to assert itself. Indeed, some of the crucial elements of a national political identity are sorely lacking. There is no common language, there is no common political or ancestral history, and there are no unifying myths or dominant culture to which the three ethnic nationalities can turn to as a way to inspire its people. Aside from the promises of global prestige that the democratisation of the country could grants its citizens, there is no sense of a common political destiny uniting the people of the three ethnic nationalities living within the geographical sphere of Nigeria. This is the reason we recommended in chapter 13 of this thesis that the country needs political restructuring to create possibilities for a political mood capable of lifting the morale of the people for a national political identity. Indeed, a political construction where individual qualification would not be based on his ethnicity, regional, or religious affiliation, but purely on merit under the dictates of the constitution.

Nigeria has been trying to promote a new, and broader national consciousness, by discouraging all forms of ethnic sentiment through democratisation. But even if ethnic identity were no more high on the agenda of its leaders and the electorates, then identity claims in Nigeria, no matter how artificially construed they are, are still a product of long histories, and not laboratory experiments, or elaborate national debates, nor are they product of Abuja Seminars. Thus, in trying to deny the natural existence of ethnic appeal within the three nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani through devotion to an abstract democratic feeling represented by the single notion of Nigeria national identity, demands a decisive political leadership and action. It is expected that our recommendation for a restructured geopolitical zones in the country might create a political dilemma that is capable of shaking the very structure of Nigeria's democratic project. But can one rightly claim that democratic politics in

the country would be possible without restructuring the existing political structures which was constructed and based on the primordial loyalties of the ethnic nationalities!

The strong nature of ethnic identity and the lack of a meaningful and more inclusive replacement for it, means that the people of the three tribes in Nigeria have no compelling identity to embrace. The success of the democratic project in Nigeria relies exclusively on the ability of the three ethnic nationalities to show tolerance and mutual accommodation based on abstract notions of common humanity, something that, given Nigeria's historical record of ethnic influenced politics and with the persistent record of interethnic conflict, does not offer a solid promise. However, as identities of ethnic nationalities are pushed to the margins through an alien construct represented by democracy, their ability to command loyalty will grow less stronger and will less brazenly energise the people of the three ethnic groups within the Nigerian state, who will have little inclination to feel "Hausa-Fulani" or "Igbo or "Yoruba", but that can only be possible when the fundamentals of democratic politics and the events within the larger Nigerian society do not give them the audacity to ignore such identification in the first place (see Table 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 in chapter 9). But the lack of a strong and dominant culture, or a unifying myth that can stand as alternative identity capable of serving as a reference point, has made the three ethnic nations to cling to their ethnic and social backgrounds as their primary identity.

In view of the above reasons, the reworking of the federal constitution, the remodelling of the political and electoral system is necessary. As recommended in chapter 13, if the constitution is reworked, and the electoral system and political system is changed, then, there would be possibilities for changes in the outcome of elections conducted in the country. This is so particularly, if the Germany or Israel model is adopted, where no one single political party would be strong enough to form the government without coalition partner, and where parliamentary seat distribution would be allotted also on the strength or percentage of votes won by each registered political party. The Peoples Democratic Party has been in power at the national level controlling the three arms of the government since 1999 return to democratic politics. The Party has been also in control of average of 25 federal states from a total of 36 federal states since 1999 to 2011. In this case, the country has only been experiencing just one brand of politics. The people have not experienced another style of politics as represented by other existing political parties. The political system

in place does not provide participation of other political parties at the national level and in majority of the federal states. But the reason why the Party has been winning all previous elections is another field for future researchers to go into.

While Nigeria is slowly developing into a democratic country, with established democratic institutions, and measures all in a bid to create a political environment capable of motivating the three nationalities of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani to transcend their local identities and forge a sense of a new common national identity; the political uncertainties created through negative mindset by the three dominant ethnic nationalities in Nigeria presents formidable democratic challenges. But due to inadequacies in the 1999 federal constitution, the capability of democracy in convincing the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba alike to see themselves first and foremost as Nigerians and identify with the political institutions and values associated to democratic politics for the common good of a united and stable Nigeria, becomes questionable and doubtful. It is our modest opinion that if the political terrains in the country are modified and restructured, then, the democratic values will have enticing properties to appeal to the people of these three ethnic nationalities, and which will invariably make them to overcome their strong ethnic influenced political consciousness, and remove the human created impediments moulded in their social, and cultural backgrounds.

Although, critics of ethnic influenced political ideals are quick to dismiss it as an exclusive ideology, but there is no doubt about it, that to command loyalty from subjects, societies need to be inclusive, and there is no doubt also, that ethnic loyalty may produce intolerant strains and can engender exclusion. But inclusion cannot be achieved at the price of renouncing collective identity; not only would that be a humiliating act of cultural self-negation, but it would also be counter-productive. The people of the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani that reside outside their ancestral homelands are left without any tool to motivate and encourage their integration into their host communities. But then, host communities often feels threatened in their core allegiances, and this singular act do force them to react by resorting to stronger versions of their ethnic loyalty. This is also akin to something that is already happening across Nigeria with the rise of ethnic killings and the rise of xenophobic incidents.

We solemnly believe that, renouncing ethnic identity in the name of democratic politics in Nigeria would deprive the various tribal societies of a vital component of social cohesion, namely a common narrative on which the people can depend on and identify with. No doubt, in an age of increased diversity within societies, Nigeria needs to encourage the expansion of its boundaries of inclusion while at same time recognising that its commitment to liberal democratic values need not be so broad as to become meaningless. Ultimately though, people still need to identify and feel they belong. Identity matters and the future of democratic politics in Nigeria will largely depend on which of the identities will ultimately command the allegiance and loyalty of the three ethnic nationalities.

Currently, the pattern of democratic politics in Nigeria neither encourages integration policies, nor offers any alternative that is capable of promoting assimilation and multi-cultural accommodation. There are grave consequences to democratic politics in the country under this state of affairs: in the course of my research on this subject matter, and as explained in chapter 5, a greater percentage of respondents from the three ethnic nationalities in Kano, Abeokuta and Enugu believe that they are either, Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, or Yoruba first and that they are Nigerian citizens only as a matter of administrative necessity rather than out of primordial allegiance. While Democracy actively discourages ethnic loyalty and support national patriotism, it does not offer a strong pan-Nigerian identity and a successful and functioning model for harmonious ethnic integration.

I share in the opinion that, for the Nigerian democratic project to overcome the held negative ethnic mindset from the three ethnic nations against each other, then the democratic institutions and governments must realise that democracy in its raw form alone cannot offer a compelling common identity, shared values for all the people of these nations. In essence a set of compelling alternatives must be provided. This will begin with the implementation of each of the recommended issues in chapter 13. Certainly, failure to provide renewed national platform that is capable of creating a condition for a common citizenship based on shared values as represented by the constitution of the country would inversely promote and motivate the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani to hold onto their individual primordial allegiance, and thus create room for narrower identities to fully assert themselves. Nevertheless, the allegiance to one's ethnic identity must also not be viewed necessarily as force of evil. But there is the need to create a national identity, though not without bearing in mind that



Identity matters, as it forms the indispensable nucleus and glue that cements every society.

However, on the strength of experience gathered from the three ethnic homelands of Abeokuta, Kano, and Enugu, it is acknowledged that group identity and mutual solidarity anchored on the premise of primordial loyalty is the ultimate foundation of existence in the larger communities of the three ethnic groups. And so, the apologist of democratic politics should be careful, and not think or believe that the negative ethnic mindset so displayed by these groups would thaw and melt away with time. Furthermore, if the status quo in the structure of the country is allowed to remain as it is currently, then the argument that democratic politics deeply influenced by ethnic mindset would fade away with time in Nigeria seem very slim and remote; even if there is a new ready-made pan-Nigerian identity in the making through democratic politics. But in so much as the various ethnic nationalities are not willing to trade-off certain issues for a more national cause, then an artificial blend of symbols, narratives, and memories that will somehow appeal to almost 167 million people mainly from the three ethnic nations in Nigeria will be difficult, if not impossible to create. The force needed for the restructuring of the country through the four cardinal areas as raised in chapter 13 is vested in the authority of the three larger ethnic nationalities. In the event of boundary realignment, the northern region will lose hold of Kwara and large parts of Kogi states to the Yoruba, and the Igbo will gain Anioma areas in Delta state (part of old Midwestern region), as well as areas south of Benue state in Northern region. In order to create a true federal structure, federal states should compose of people of the same ethnic nationality. This would reduce discord and political disagreement that necessitated the introduction of power rotation, and quota system.

The eclipse of the military regimes in the extraordinary series of events that run from 1993 to 1999 gave the Hausa-Fulani, the Igbo, and the Yoruba ethnic nationalities an unprecedented opportunity to redefine themselves as well as their relations with each other through the broader instrument of democratic politics. Eager to help this process along, individuals within and outside the three ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani formed political parties, with the sole intention of establishing a political system, which upholds the principle of political association and emphasises individual rights and freedoms. Despite these incentives provided by the democratic political system, however, most of the individuals from the three ethnic groups did not

relent from hiding at the back of their ethnic groups to propagate their political goals. This happened not minding the fall of the military government, which created extensive political ripples across the political spectrum in the country. With overwhelming desire to democratise the society, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, traces of strong attraction to politics without ethnic relevance emerged. But the euphoria was not to last long, as the situation in the country nose-dived.

It was noticeable then, especially in the western and eastern states the role that democratic activists personalities assumed after the collapse of military dictatorship. Most active politicians in these regions did not share nor had any radical agenda that could place the idea of social and developmental politics at the centre of democratic consciousness in the country. What was most paramount to the elites at the time was the triumph over the military dictatorship in the country, and it was to the negligence of the people's needs. This idea dominated the post-military transition period, thus overshadowing alternative social and individual organising principles, such as liberal democracy, universalism, non-ethnic form of political orientation or regionalism, and Pan-Nigerian philosophy. Although all of these alternatives were part of the repertoire of transformation, none became as powerful as the principle of ethnic identity. Politicians from each of the three ethnic nations (Igbo, Hausa-Fulani, and Yoruba) fell apart along ethnic lines, and many ethnic cultural organisations began asserting ethnic political interest in various forms.

The military handed over leadership power to the politicians without addressing any of the fundamental problems facing the country. In another way, the Politicians did not also see the necessity of restructuring the country, but prefer to savour first, the victory for forcing the military out of power. Indeed, the mistake of the past leaders was equally repeated by those who assumed leadership responsibility in 1999. As shown in table 9.1, 9. 2, and 9, 3 in chapter 9 of this study, the political implication of unresolved national questions as noticed in the 1950s, 1960s and late 1979 was re-enacted in 2011. In essence, it clearly support the argument that restructuring of the country in the light of the recommendations made in chapter 13 of this study would create the needed environment for democratic politics in Nigeria to succeed.

Naturally, each ethnic society in Nigeria has different conditions for nation building after the collapse of the military in 1999. For instance, the Igbo and the Yoruba had large number of political activists in the country, whose primary concern were the political relevance of their ethnic nations; the Hausa-Fulani had no significant complaint; as the previous military leaders were people of the ethnic group. Under such diverse conditions, democratic building took different forms and had different consequences; but thinking in terms of “ethnic nation” and “national identity” remained prevalent across the three ethnic groups. At the same time, ethnic “*nation, homeland, and democratic governance*” demanded a clear-cut definition free from any kind of political ambiguity.

The inability of the policy makers in Abuja to provide answers to the above three terminologies made the democratic future of the country remain uncertain and fragile. Negative ethnic mindset remained in the political calculations of the Yoruba, Igbo as well as the Hausa-Fulani and therefore compelled most Nigerian politicians to assume that ethnic political connection is potentially necessary for the enhancement of their political relevance in the country. We began certainly to ask questions based on the premise of the above situation. At what point does ethnic loyalty become dangerous? And should one expect more minimalist national strategies of today’s Nigeria to turn into irredentism or secessionism in the future? These questions reveal the perseverance of the underlying presumption that, ultimately, the aim of ethnic identity is to achieve cultural-political congruence in the form of a nation-state relation. But many political elites and scholars both within and outside Nigeria have believed that democratisation and national integration will eventually render ethnic sentiments obsolete. But in opposition to the above analogy, we argued that, unless there is internal restructuring of the Nigerian state, democracy, no matter how potent or refined it may be, cannot succeed in the country. Reworking of the constitution is needed to remove some of the impediments as presented in chapter 13 of this study.

Indeed, while a number of impulses have led the Nigerian society to pursue a project of political Party enlargement, a core element has been the notion that the rational pluralist democratic politics that is evolving in the country would help stabilise the political schisms in the country and particularly between the Igbo, the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba. One other assumption is that the practice of democratic politics in

Nigeria would lead to sustainable mutual development between the peoples of the three largest ethnic groups. It was also claimed that it would lead to the establishment and adoption of democratic norms and principles in the country. Or that it would ensure that governments in the local council, federal states and at the national level behaved “responsibly.” These expectations found theoretical support in the modernist school of liberal democratic theory that predicted the decline of ethnic loyalty as a result of increased socio-economic development, as well as in the studies that approached ethnic nationalism as a “disease of democratic transition”. There may be some kind of truth in the above assertion, but democracy as a system cannot function optimally in an unstable environment. Ethnic loyalty cannot decline in a Nigerian like environment, because the reasons for discord in the society is not borne out of socio-economic development, rather, it can be traced to issues discussed in chapter 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 and chapter 9 of this thesis.

Furthermore, ethnic loyalty and every other aspect of primordial loyalty inherent in societies are not fading away in Nigeria, and that make it more difficult in the effort to chart new direction for democratic process in the country. The urge for development of democratic politics has increased the political consciousness of the people in the country, and created also a comparative platform through which the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani come to assess and reorganise their political strategies over the time. The re-ordering and introduction of the issues recommended by this study would not only solve one of the major problems confronting election conduct and management in the country, but the measures, if approved by the various ethnic nationalities would produce a national awareness that could influence political consciousness and create new political orientation among the three dominant ethnic groups in the country. Election rigging and every other associated abnormal democratic practice would be effectively checked and controlled. But some questions need to be answered or clarified. Some of these questions are;

- (i). what happens to ethnocentrism when sovereignty becomes “shared” and the flow of people and ideas accelerates across existing ethnic boundaries?

(ii). does the traditional face of ethnic mindset, defined primarily as a political world-view about others, and which holds that the political success in a divided society is dependent on ethnic primordial loyalty, change substantively?

(iii). does the ethnic nation identity on which so many comparative and democratic theories depend lose its significance?

In any case, it is our candid view that, ethnic and regional integrative processes significantly change domestic and political opportunities and structures needed for the pursuits of a coherent national political-culture, but do not render them obsolete. Rather, old and new forms of ethnocentrism co-exist and mutually challenge and reinforce one another in a complex process that shapes the chances and direction of integration in a divided society. Put differently, integration influenced by democratic politics does not cause ethnic identity to lose its relevance. But the national identity strategy is only one of a number of ongoing political pursuits in contemporary Nigeria. Based on their historical goals in relation to the state structure, each of the ethnic nationalities has its own political logic and institutional consequences for the Nigerian state. In the case of Nigerian, democracy alone cannot regulate the structural inadequacies embedded in the foundation of the country, and the ethnic nationalities cannot also regulate themselves; it is only the constitution that has the capacity and capability to address and effect the necessary modification required by democracy.

The introduction of democratic politics does not significantly shift the balance between the three ethnic groups pursuing different types of political relevance in the country. The domestic political structure determines the definition of national interest of any country. In the case of Nigeria (see Figure i below), several fundamental issues combines to influence political policies in the country. This constitutes also what determine the position that ethnic groups take with them to the national negotiation tables. To the peoples of the three ethnic groups, the question of 1914 North-South amalgamation in the political realm means different things to them. With the Nigerian political transition still open-ended, then would may be right to say that unless the country is constitutionally modified, both in political, and in structural realm, it will be extremely difficult to point to a particular time when the democratic Window

will draw to a close or to estimate the political direction or status that the “Ethnic influenced political mindset” of the three dominant groups will assume in the future.

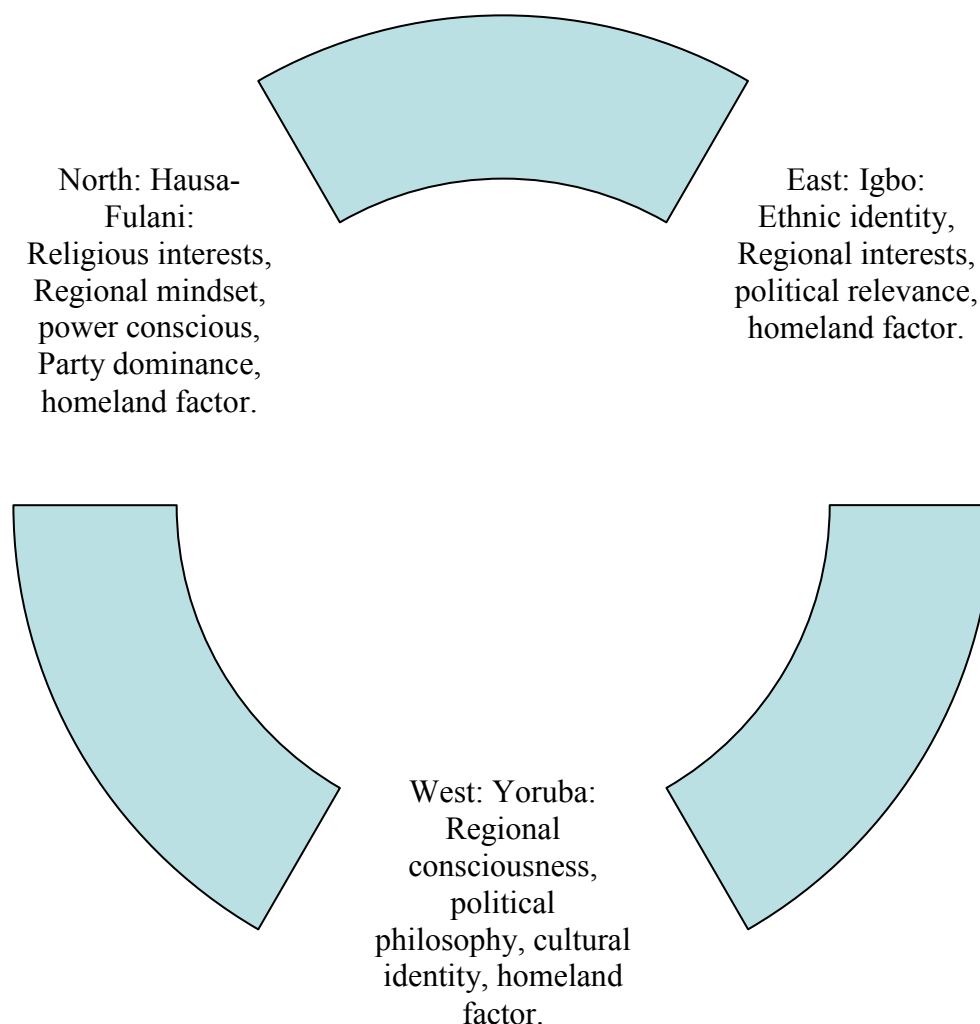


Figure i. showing the aggregate determinant of political bargaining point in each ethnic group of Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani (Source, Okoro 2012).

Although, the reality of democratic values is so much clear to the majority of those who are conversant with issues on political cooperation between people of divergent identities and orientations, but good number of the people who contributed to this debate showed some kind of political anxiety, with concerns especially about Nigeria’s political future. However, some of the main problems that impeded heavily on political relations among the Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani have been the issues contained in (Figure I above).

As noted in chapter 11 of this Thesis, the election of the Speaker of the federal House of Representatives presents a scenario for these feared democratic challenges. A political disagreement in a political party between members on a party principle could torpedo the national political structure and balance, just as it did in the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), whereby a section of the country was shut out from the power structure of the country. But as discovered in chapter 5, 6, 9, and chapter 11 of this Thesis, the age long recurring area of political conflict between Igbo, Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani, has been in the area of which ethnic group occupies what political office and in particular the religion of such individual. Under situations like that experienced in the 2011 elections, internal boundary restructuring, political system modification, constitutional re-working and parity in the federal states under each geopolitical zone would have taken care of such political contingency.

Nigeria has for years maintained unstable political policies through the over dominance of ethnic minded political actors. If one looks at the trend at which political decisions are continually being structured as to accommodate the sentiments or fear of ethnic outburst by the various administrations in the country, without necessary constitutional back-up, then one would have no reason but to believe that the road to democratic success in Nigeria is never in sight. There is every reason to be sceptic about the success of democratic politics in Nigeria, because everything revolves around the defect foundational structures the country is built upon.

Since each of the three ethnic groups in the country has a style of approach to national policy issues, the chances are that a political reality may confront the country, in fact a political situation that may not be politically favourable to the political alignment among the ethnic groups may emerge; and in that case whatever the lofty ideas the politics at the centre might want to promise the electorates within these areas may not make any significant impact, or may not be strong enough to arouse their interest. The present structure of the country guarantees not many people anything tangible enough to give them hope for a better tomorrow. The Constitution as argued in my recommendation did not emerge from the popular will of the people. If there is any serious challenge to the corporate existence of the country, chances are that the outcome may consequently lead to further distortion in the already existing mutual but incoherent political relations among the three largest ethnic nationalities.

Realistically, under the present structure of the country and as made possible by the current constitution, there cannot be any political alliance between the Igbo, and the Yoruba, whereby the Hausa-Fulani controlled Northern Nigeria would be isolated. Since independence, the Hausa-Fulani has been in the Government. There has never been any Government formed in the country without the active participation of the Hausa-Fulani. Although, there are many Nigerians on the street, who would wish the Hausa-Fulani politicians are excluded from participating in Nigerian politics.

However, to get the democratic advancement in Nigeria right, the issues as discussed in the various chapters of this thesis, as well as the recommendation made in chapter 13 for the correction of the inadequacies in the foundation of the country need to be implemented. If and when implemented, democratic elections in the country would be to large extent problem free, as the usual issues based on political marginalisation, political dominance, regional relevance and the struggle against ethnic capitulation, would be under control. In as much as the national questions in Nigeria's political life remain sectional oriented, and politically trivialised, then success of democratic politics devoid of ethnic mindset will continue to elude the country and her people.



**Appendix: i. The Power Configuration representing the democratic periods in Nigeria. 1963 – 2011**

Post Republic Election and Coalition Government.				
Year	Democratic System	Coalition Partners	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
1963-1966	Parliamentary Democracy	NPC		Hausa-Fulani
		NCNC		Igbo
			AG	Yoruba

Defect Presidential Democracy and Government.				
Year	Democratic System	Coalition Partners	Opposition	Ethnic Configuration
1979-1983				
	Presidential	NPN		Hausa-Fulani
		NPP		Igbo
			UPN	Yoruba

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
1999-2003				
	Presidential	PDP		Yoruba –Hausa(Kanuri)
			APP/AD	

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
2003-2007				
	Presidential	PDP		Yoruba-Hausa(Kanuri)
			ANPP/AD	

Presidential Democracy and Government.				
2007-2011				
	Presidential	PDP		Hausa-Fulani-East (Ijaw)
			ANPP/ACN	

## Appendix ii

<b>Individuals Interviewed in the Eastern region (Igboland):</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Office and Location</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Professor Ike S. Ndolo	Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria Nsukka.	29.11.2010
Professor Emannuel O Ezeani	Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka	24.06.2009, and 29.11.2010
Professor Obasi Igwe	Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.	23.11.2010
Professor Francis Aja Okorie	Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki	10.10.2010
Chief Charles Egumgbe	Former Chairman Peoples Democratic Party, Enugu State.	26.05.2009
Barrister Ray Nnaji	Auditor Peoples Democratic Party, Enugu State.	26.05.2009
Anonymous	Member of the Federal Parliament (House of Reps)	16.10.2010
Anonymous	Member of the Federal Parliament (House of Reps)	16.10.2010
Anonymous	Member of the Federal Parliament (Senate)	16.10.2010
Anonymous	Ex Senator, Federal Republic	20.11.2010
Anonymous	Ex Senator, Federal Republic	15.11.2010
Hon. Ogbonnaya O. Akpoke	Ex Coordinator, Okposi Community Development Area, Ebonyi State	08.10.2011
Mr Chidi Ozochi	Senior Lecturer, Federal College of Education (Technical), Enugu.	28.05.2009
Mr Emeka Ede	Vice Chairman, Enugu North Local Government Area, Enugu State.	02.06.2009
Emmanuel Echeoma	Non-affiliated	08.10.2010
Alfred Nwankwo	Businessman, Ogbete main Market, Enugu	28.05.2009
Chijioke Umunna	Businessman, Ogbete Main Market, Enugu	28.10.2009
Amaeze Ugwu	Senior Civil servant, Enugu State government.	27.05.2009

Alfred Oseni	Senior Staff, University of Benin, (Enugu)	12.11.2010
Chijioke Ozomelu	Non-affiliated, Enugu	08.10.2010
Uzoma Ibegbu	Retired federal civil Servant, Enugu	08.10.2010
Albert Udensi	Non-affiliated, Enugu	24.05.2009
Anonymous	Ministry of Finance, Enugu	10.10.2010
Anselm Udenkwo	Non-affiliated, Enugu	08.10.2011
Prof Mathias Ezeoba	University of Zurich, Switzerland	20.02.2011

### Appendix iii

<b>Individuals Interviewed in the Western region (Yorubaland):</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Office and Location</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Anonymous	Civil Service Commission, Abeokuta	12.10.2010
Mr Benedict Uche Anyanwu	Department of Mechanical Engineering Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	03.10.2010
Eng Olayide Rasaq Adetunji	Department of Mechanical Engineering, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.	03.10.2010
Anonymous	Member Federal Parliament (House of Reps)	10.07.2009
Anonymous	Member Federal Parliament (House of Reps)	10.07.2009
Anonymous	Member Federal Parliament (Senate)	11.07.2009
Anonymous	Senior Staff, Peoples Democratic Party, State Headquarters, Abeokuta , Ogun State	11.07.2009
Anonymous	Senior Staff, State Headquarters, Action Congress of Nigeria, Abeokuta, Ogun State	09.10.2010
Anonymous	Director of Research, Action Congress of Nigeria, Abeokuta, Ogun State.	09.10.2010
Mr Adeoye Odedeji	Department of General Studies, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic Abeokuta.	09.10.2010
Prof. S. O. Akinboye	Department of Political Science, University of Lagos.	03.07.2009
Prof. A. M. Ninalowo	Department of Sociology, University of Lagos.	03.07.2009
Mr A. A. Raufu	Department of Mass Communication, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta.	09.10.2010
Anonymous	Member State House of Assembly, Lagos State (Ikorodu 1. Constituency)	20.12.2010

Animashaun Okenla	Senior Staff, Ministry of Education, Ogun state	23.10.2010
Dauda Idowu	Senior Staff, Ministry of Education, Ogun State.	23.10.2010
Samson Okonkwo	Non-affiliated	16.10.2010
Chief Odumasu Abiodun	Senior member, ACN, Ogun state	23.10.2010
Ezendu Ifediorah	Political Analyst/Non-affiliated, Lagos	20.12.2010
Samson Akpan	Senior Civil servant, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Ogun state	23.10.2010
Ademola Philip	Senior Staff, Ministry of Education, Ogun state	15.10.2010
Sobayo Shobande	Non-affiliated, Abeokuta	16.10.2010
Olagunju Bamidele	Retired Staff, Ministry of Education, Ogun state	16.10.2010
Abigail Olakitan	Senior civil servant, Ogun State	16.10.2010
Solomon Adebiyi	Senior Staff, Ministry of Education, Ogun state	24.10.2010

Appendix iv

<b>Individuals Interviewed in the Northern region (Hausaland):</b>		
Name	Office and Location	Date of Interview
Dr Iro Iro Uke	Department of Political Science, University of Abuja	08.06.2009
Dr Saleh Dauda	Department of History, University of Abuja	07.07.2009
Professor Ahmed Alkali	National Publicity Secretary, Peoples Democratic Party, Abuja.	04.06.2009
Mr David Dogoh	National Director of Research, All Nigerian Peoples Party, Abuja.	04.06.2009
Alhaji Garba Albali	National Director of Research, Action Congress of Nigeria, Abuja.	09.06.2009
Professor Kabiru Isa Dandago	Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, Bayero University, Kano.	15.06.2009
Professor Kabir Mato	Department of Political Science, University of Abuja	07.07.2009
Anonymous	Member of the Federal Parliament (House of Reps)	04.10.201
Anonymous	Member, State House of Assembly, Kano.	04.10.2010
Anonymous	Member State House of Assembly, Kano.	17.06.2010
Anonymous	Peoples Democratic Party, Kano State.	15.06.2010
Kenneth Gyado	Senior Publicity Officer, Peoples Democratic Party, National Headquarters, Abuja.	09.06.2009
Anonymous	Senior Staff, State Headquarters, All Nigerian Peoples Party, Kano.	16.07.2009
Ahmed Mohammed	Faculty of Social of Sciences, Bayero University, Kano.	15.06.2009
Mr Adeniji Adeyinka	Department of Political Science, University of Abuja. (Lecturer)	08.06.2009
Muhammadu Waziri	Faculty of Social Sciences, Bayero University, Kano.	15.06.2009
Alhaji Abdulkadir Shehu	Islamic Teacher	16.06.2009

Alhaji Usman Dambatta	Non-affiliated	18.06.2009
Alhaji Inuwa Gusau	Staff, Ministry of Education, Kano state	18.06.2009
Alhaji Umaru Gwarzo	Member, ANPP, kano state	16.06.2009
Alhaji Yinusa Abdullahi	Senior civil Servant, Abuja	05.06.2009
Alhaji Mahmud Abdullahi	Businessman, Sabon gari market, Kano.	04.10.2010
Malam Ilyasu Maina	Senior civil servant, Kano.	04.10.2010
Obioha Nwankwo	Non-affiliated, Abuja	09.06.2009
Alhaji Alhassan Modibo	Senior civil Servant, Kano	15.06.2009
Alhaji Mahmud Bashir	Senior Official, ACN, Abuja	30.09.2011

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MARA Student Travel Assistance Award 2009

This award is extended to graduate Students to enable them to travel for their Field Research.

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I was one of the Six Foreign Students at the Hochschule Fulda who received the Student Financial Assistance Award in 2006.

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2007: Research Assistant, Department of Intercultural Communication and European Studies, Hochschule Fulda, Germany, with Professor Gisela Baumgratz-Gangl.

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Available upon request